

## **Parishioner Stewardship Testimonials given on Sunday, October 2, 2016**

### **Eric Motley**

A few weeks ago, while attending a policy conference, a fellow parishioner realized she knew me. She came up afterwards, introduced herself, and said, "I know you. You're the guy who carries the Cross." And for a very brief second, ego-ridden, I felt somewhat discontented at only being recognized for carrying the Cross!

But in a moment's reflection it suddenly came upon me that one of the most fulfilling and honorable acts that I perform here in this Christian community is being able to, from time to time, carry the Cross. It is one of the holiest of experiences - being able to sit so close to the altar; to visually and spiritually take in the fullness of the Eucharistic celebration; to lift high the Cross on behalf of everyone in worship as to represent our collective outward yearnings and upward aspirations. And in case you are wondering, yes it is heavy, so we must all play our part.

Through the ministries of Christ Church we help carry the Cross and reach people beyond the walls of this sanctuary. Some of the most important work we do beyond worship is providing food and shelter through our homeless ministries; supporting the education of little boys, on the other side of Washington, at the Bishop Walker School, whose opportunities are far less than ours; and meeting the immediate needs of those who are recovering from the devastations of hurricanes, fires, and floods in places here and all over the world. The pledges you make help support the manifestation of these ministries. In this Stewardship season the more you give, the more we are able to do for those who have far less. We must all carry the Cross! I am reminded of the words of a 17th century poet who wrote: *"Must Jesus bear the cross alone, and all the world go free? No, there's a cross for everyone, and there's a cross for me."*

### **Shep Burr**

My name is Shep Burr. My wife Alice and I have been members of Christ Church, Georgetown for almost 25 years. We raised our now-grown daughters in this church, and have been fortunate to have served in various ways over the years. As I wrote Stuart Kenworthy upon his retirement, it would be impossible to overstate the importance of this place in the lives of my family and me. And it is amazing to think of just how many people have felt exactly the same way throughout Christ Church's 200-year history.

This is the time we are asked to prayerfully consider what part of our treasure we should give to Christ Church for the coming year. I believe this is an opportunity for special reflection on the blessings that God consistently and astonishingly bestows, big and small, from miraculous to unknown, to us. Christ Church is certainly one of these blessings for us, as well as for people we help through our outreach. Once having considered all of our blessings, it is pretty easy to make a generous pledge to Christ Church. Isn't there a wonderful satisfaction in letting God know we are grateful by loving him back in this way?

### **Amy Dean**

Good morning, I'm Amy Dean, and I am here with my husband Michael Dean and our 4-year-old daughter Cora. I've been asked to speak about what Christ Church means to me. We regularly started attending after Cora was baptized, and to us church is very important to our family. We

attend as a family, Cora goes to Sunday School afterwards, and during the week, she makes references to the fact that we are a family. And Christ Church is a family. We have truly enjoyed the fellowship we have found here. I work in politics, and I was happy to find fellow Christians in DC. Cora has learned the Lord's Prayer in Sunday School, and we believe that Christ Church will instill habits and values she will have in her future.

I encourage you to support the church during our October Stewardship Campaign. I am co-chair of the stewardship committee, and when I saw the numbers, I found it interesting that the highest level of giving in the church's recent history was after 9/11. I strongly encourage you to give now and not just when we are in a time of crisis. We are very grateful for your donations, and the church depends on them. Thank you.

### **Kathy Carmean**

Good morning. As I prepared to talk with you today, I reflected upon our five years as parishioners at Christ Church and why this community of faith has grown to mean so much. Tooley Cameron captured it perfectly on Homecoming Sunday when she said to me: "It has been three days of love." During those three days we said goodbye to two beloved parishioners and joyously welcomed the Coles into the Christ Church family. Three days filled with expressions of God's love.

On a personal note, Christ Church ministered to EA and me two weeks after moving here. As a former parishioner from the 70's and 80's before leaving for Texas, EA had maintained some dear friends here at Christ Church who later became mine as well. I was so grateful for the love and outpouring of support as EA spent two weeks in Sibley's ICU, fighting for his life, followed by 42 more days of hospitalization and rehab. The way this community of faith ministered to us during our "dark night of the soul" was life-giving. We are so grateful and seek to give in return to celebrate God's love in our midst.

For 200 years this community has been lavishly sharing God's love in so many ways: our outreach ministries, our faith formation, our music, our liturgy and, most especially, in the sharing of our gifts - both monetary and spiritual - all from God. EA and I encourage you to consider the great joy that comes in giving and receiving. Please prayerfully consider the pledge you will make both financially and in acts of service for 2017, so that we can continue the legacy of being Christ's light in the world for another 200 years. I leave you with the words of a favorite gospel hymn by Doris Akers that expresses our experience of the people of Christ Church:

*There's a sweet, sweet spirit in this place, and I know that it's the spirit of the Lord.  
There are sweet expressions on each face, and I know that it's the presence of the Lord.  
Sweet, Holy Spirit, Sweet, heavenly dove, stay right here with us, filling us with your love.  
And for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise.  
Without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived, when we shall leave this place.*