

Stewardship Testimonials, Sunday, October 23, 2016

David English, 8:00 a.m.

Thank you for the introduction. My name is David English. I have been a regular parishioner here at Christ church for more than 20 years, so I am sure some of you recognize me. About 2 years ago I got my first smart phone. I had just gotten my first full time job and was moving out to my own apartment for the first time so, as you can imagine, it was a hectic time in my life. About a month later I was relaxing in my apartment watching Netflix and my phone beeped. It was an automatic reminder that the last bus home was leaving in 15 minutes, and I needed to leave now if I was going to make it. As you can imagine that was a surprise to me. I was pretty sure I was at home watching TV. I was also curious, so I went and looked at the directions it was giving me and they were to 31st and O Street in Georgetown. The one constant google had found through the time I had owned my phone was here, and so it decided that this must be home. At the time I thought this was a funny mistake by the phone's AI. I just updated my home address and didn't really think about it again.

As I said I have been a parishioner here for more than 20 years. I have attended services regularly with my family. I have gone to Sunday school here. I went through the Rite13, J2A and YAC here. I went on a pilgrimage to Taize, France, with people from this church. I have been an Acolyte, Lector and an Usher. So, when I was asked to give a quick talk for the pledge month, and I started thinking about what Christ Church meant to me, the story of my phone kept popping into my head. Maybe Google was smarter than I thought. This church has been a huge part of my life since before I can remember. What made that possible was a long history – nearly 200 years—of people supporting the parish with their labor and contributions. Now it is our turn. Our turn to support, not just the youth ministries here, but all of the important ministries Christ Church is involved in. Our turn to make sure it can be for all of the young kids here what I was lucky enough to have it be for me. To help make that happen, please volunteer for one of the many activities around the parish and join me in contributing to the support of our church.

Rachel Davies-Van Voorhis, 9:00 a.m.

Good morning everyone! My name is Rachel Davies-Van Voorhis, I am 17 years old, and I have been attending Christ Church Georgetown since before I was born. In my in utero days, my parents attended the 8 o'clock service, but once I arrived, they moved to this wonderful, child-rich, 9 o'clock. I have sat with my parents and my brother in the front left pew every Sunday for as long as I can remember, barring only sick days and summer vacation. Every year, as the Stewardship campaign begins, we get hear a lot of varied and interesting stories about different peoples' journeys to Christ Church, which I love, but have trouble relating to — as I did not have much choice about coming to Christ Church. Needless to say, I have grown to love it here, but I do want to draw your attention to a significant portion of the population, especially at the 9 o'clock service: children and youth.

Speaking as a child of Christ Church, I can say that this is not a place that I come to. It is a place that I am. This is the place that formed me, and continues to form me, as a Christian. And I can attest to the fact that the Christian identities of the children of this parish will be formed, in large part, by the people and the programs that we have here. Personally, I think the quality of

the people is already extraordinary, but the programs do require funding. So, I would like to ask you to pledge to the stewardship campaign, not as a charitable donation for today, not as another “good works” box to check, but as a solid investment in people like me, the future of the Episcopal Church, and of the world. To close this out, I realize that it would be appropriate to quote Jesus, but I have to admit that the first thing that comes to my mind is my favorite quote, often attributed to Winston Churchill: “We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.”

Doug Kirby, 11:15 a.m.

Good morning. As some of you know, I was an Army officer for 27 years. In 2006, I met and got to know our previous rector, Stuart Kenworthy, while we were both deployed to Baghdad. He led a weekly Episcopal service that was the best hour of my week. We redeployed from Baghdad at different times and did not stay in touch. Fast forward six years to Lent of 2012. I am now assigned to the Pentagon and decided to begin attending the weekly Wednesday Episcopal service. On my second Wednesday attending the service, I walked in and saw a familiar face – Stuart Kenworthy. There was a rotation of priests who led these weekly services; he was the celebrant for that day. He looked up from his notes and immediately recognized me. After the service we talked for a few minutes, got caught up, and he invited me to visit Christ Church. So that next Sunday, I did. It was one of the best decisions I have made. At the time I was still searching for church home in the area. What I found on that second Sunday of Lent stays with me. That day and every day since, I felt welcomed and at home. By Easter Sunday of that year, I had decided move my membership here.

Looking out from the lectern this morning, I see the reasons I stay a member of the parish among the people I have gotten to know and the friends I have made here. Christ Church is a supportive community of people, united by our shared faith, dedicated to deepening and expressing that faith in a multitude of ways, and committed to serving others both within the parish and in our communities. Through the many programs, ministries, and resources of the parish, we all worship, learn, grow and serve. In both corporate and personal prayer, I give thanks for these blessings. Out of gratitude, I try to give back how I can. They are among the main reasons I stayed in this area when I retired from the Army last November.

I have come to believe more and more that God puts people, places, and opportunities in our lives for a reason. During this stewardship campaign please reflect on how you came to Christ Church, why you stay, and how this parish has blessed you as you consider how you can contribute. Maybe in Christ Church Georgetown you have found, people, place, and opportunities, too. Thank you.

Lindsey de la Torre, 5:00 p.m.

I was fortunate enough to find Christ Church shortly after I moved to DC over 10 years ago. Through my involvement with the Youth and Family Ministry Committee, soup kitchen, hams for Holy Week, and attending choral Evensong, among other great programs at Christ Church, I have seen first hand the impact that our church has had on our members and our community, not to mention the tremendous impact that it has had on me personally. It has kept me centered in a city where I might otherwise have lost sight of what truly matters: the love of God and His infinite blessings in our lives. Christ Church and its members have been a constant

source of love, faith, and an example of selflessness in my life. I cherish dear friends in the family of Christ Church who have been an endless source of strength and wise counsel through both the successes and challenges of life.

Recently I was driving across Key Bridge and was lucky enough to see Reverend Kenworthy on a morning walk. As he ran over to my window to say hello, the stress of my morning commute was gone in an instant with his one of a kind presence and offering of blessings. It again reminded me of how blessed I am to have found this magical place. When I reflect on stewardship, I'm reminded of Psalm 24:1, *"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it."* Stewardship is defined as the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care. I am reminded daily that God has entrusted us with tremendous gifts and as I reflect on the importance of stewardship, I am mindful that it's our responsibility to search our hearts and manage the blessings we have been given for His glory. Matthew 6:21 says: *"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* I treasure Christ Church and all that it has brought to my life and to the lives of others. It is truly where my heart is.