

Stewardship Testimonial: Jay Costan, Sunday, October 9

Good morning. I am Jay Costan. I am here to talk about stewardship from the perspective of why Christ Church is important to me. Last week, Kathy Carmean addressed this same topic, telling us about her return to Washington with her husband EA. Her message was that there is a lot of God's love in this place for which she and EA are forever grateful. I can relate to Kathy's story, because I too encountered a warm welcome at Christ Church and a richness of experience beyond imagining. I first came to Christ Church in 1990, eager to start a new life in returning to some of the things from earlier in my life that seemed important. I had been raised an Episcopalian in Lynchburg, VA but had been away from the Church for some time, since my early 20's. Then, at 41, I felt a need to get back. I was living in Georgetown, and my roommate from college had been married here, so Christ Church seemed like a good place to make my return.

That was a providential decision. I will never forget coming that first Sunday, feeling a bit tentative as I sat back in the left-hand corner but forcing myself to fill out a visitor's card and go to the coffee hour. Again, a providential decision, because there I met Betsy Rackley, and I could not have been more warmly received. Betsy showed me around; I was no longer a stranger. I came back to the 11:00 service and got involved in some of the mission activities, especially the Soup Kitchen. A few months later, providence struck again. This very attractive woman who also sat back in the left hand corner introduced herself to me after services one Sunday. Tongue-tied after trying to manage small talk, I blurted out "Have you ever done the Soup Kitchen?" Providence struck again. She didn't laugh (or cringe) but responded "No, I haven't, but tell me about it." Well that led to my first "date" on a Salvation Army soup truck with Margaret Hanson, the woman who about a year later was to become my wife, now of 25 years.

We were married at Christ Church in early September 1991 and have been actively involved in the life of the parish for over 25 years. I feel tremendous gratitude to Christ Church -- I can't imagine my life without it: the weekly ritual of worship and Eucharist, the music, the Adult Forum, the devotion to mission and outreach, not to mention the numerous lifelong friendships we have made as the result of being part of this community. Please consider your own story with Christ Church, and respond generously to the call of stewardship this fall to support this parish community that we all are so blessed to be a part of. Thank you.