This interview of Berkeley Moore Shervin was recorded on August 24, 2018, by Glenn Metzdorf in connection with the Bicentennial Celebration of Christ Church Georgetown.

**Glenn Metzdorf:** This is Glenn Metzdorf on August 24th, 2018, interviewing Berkeley Moore Shervin. Berk, when did you first start attending Christ Church?

**Berkeley Moore Shervin:** Glenn, my parents, I think, joined the church in the early 1960s. I was about two years old. I've been around for more than 50 years at this point. My parents had moved to Washington from Alexandria, where I was born. They became members, so I've essentially grown up in the church.

**Glenn:** That makes you kind of unique. What are your earliest memories of the parish?

**Berkeley:** I would say my earliest memory was meeting Dr. Anschutz, John Anschutz, who was the rector at the time. That meeting and all subsequent interactions, I should say, with Dr. Anschutz were really meaningful, because he was so warm and inviting.

He's one of the first adults that I recall actually kneeling down to put his face even with mine, really look me in the eye, and get to know me. I was probably five years old or something like that, but that was a really notable experience for me.

One of the things that I felt was a sense of safety, comfort, and the grace of God, if you will, with Dr. Anschutz. Always had a really strong connection with him as a result. That was one of my earliest memories, and it was a bit of a foundation for me, if you will.

**Glenn:** What are your fondest memories of Christ Church?

**Berkeley:** The whole complex here was a play land for us. Growing up, I can tell you I'm sure you know them all yourself every little passageway. I know how to get through every single building. We played upstairs in this building on the stage. We played in the basement of the church. Perhaps we shouldn't have, but we were all over the complex as kids, both me and my sisters.

Really the fondest memory, though, is serving as an acolyte and a cross bearer on Christmas Eve services. Those were really fun times.

Decorating the church in advance of Christmas services was a particularly notable experience. Sitting there on Christmas Eve, watching those...I was participating as an acolyte and a cross bearer. Being at the side of the altar, that was really a memorable experience for me.

**Glenn:** How old were you then?
Berkeley: I was probably maybe 12 or 13. Yeah, 12 or 13. By that time, I had been serving as an acolyte for some time. Being a cross bearer was notable honor.

Glenn: You mentioned Dr. Anschutz, who is the 18th rector of Christ Church. You've known him. You've known Sanford Garner. You've known Stuart Kenworthy, and now, you know Tim Cole.

Berkeley: Exactly.

Glenn: Any comments about any of those? Any comparisons? Anything you want to say about any of those?

Berkeley: As you might expect and as I've indicated, Dr. Anschutz was a very important figure. Sanford Garner was a very important figure. I was still growing up when he became the rector. My father served, as you may know, in the vestry. He was also in a search committee who then selected Sanford.

It was a very special connection with Sanford Garner. I went with my father to pick up Sanford at National Airport when he was coming for one of his first visits. I assume he had been selected by that point, because we were showing him the rectory. The rectory, at that time, was empty. Dr. Anschutz had moved out and there were some repairs going on.

My father may have been involved in coordinating and making sure that things were just right for the incoming rector. I can remember walking through the rectory with Sanford. The boys have not arrived and Mary had not arrived. They were still in Tennessee. We walked through there. That was one of my earliest introductions to Sanford.

Of course, Sanford later married my wife and me. Later on, we developed quite a extended relationship.

Glenn: I suppose Sanford probably baptized your children.

Berkeley: He did, yeah. He did.

Glenn: Then he [inaudible 5:41] Stuart or Tim.

Berkeley: When Stuart came along, I was pretty busy with my career. While I was attending church here, I was not quite as active. Although, I take that back. We did teach Sunday School. I forgot about that. We did teach Sunday School and our kids were attending Sunday School here, as well.

Honestly now, we're essentially empty nesters at this point. That feels like a horror. We had four kids. We were moving from Sunday School to soccer practice to lacrosse practice. It was, honestly, sort of a blubber. I'm sure other folks that have kids like their parents and have kids like that can relate to that.

We certainly had a great relationship with Stuart. In fact, he was...The day my mother passed away, I think that was either his first or second day on the job. That was one of our initial
contacts with him. I can remember him sitting in our living room. He arrived at eight o'clock in the morning, this is following her passing. That was one of our initial interactions.

**Glenn:** That's a long stretch of rectors to have known and attended church under their supervision in a way. Do you have any comments about any changes that you can recall in the liturgical way of things, that things were done, or things that stayed the same? Any reactions to that?

**Berkeley:** I certainly remember the, even now, ongoing debate about the prayer book. [laughs] That debate certainly carried over through from Dr. Anschutz's to Sanford's time. There was a change during Sanford's leadership there. Lots of debate in the parish about that.

I don't know the numbers exactly but my recollection is that it was almost a 50 50 debate on the change of the prayer book. Ultimately people, those that were so forward looking one. That occurred.

The other thing, of course, that occurred when Stuart arrived was that there were some physical changes to the church. The red carpet left. That very notable desk at the end, where now the baptismal font is, was removed. Then there was a very distinctive light over the lectern that was removed. Where are those by the way?

**Glenn:** The light was over the pulpit.

**Berkeley:** The pulpit, that's right.

**Glenn:** It was taken to the attic. Eventually, found a new home some place.

**Berkeley:** Where is the desk that was sitting in the...?

**Glenn:** The desk was removed to the storage. I'm not sure where that is now.

**Berkeley:** Anyway, there were some of the physical changes that took place under Stuart's tenure. Growing up, those were all the physical reminders of the inside of the church to me, plus the question about where they were. Those are couple of the changes.

**Glenn:** Anything notable that stayed the same over all the years?

**Berkeley:** This is such a unique parish in a lot of ways. It draws a combination, and continues to draw a combination, of folks who live here locally. Then has always drawn, it seems, White House staff, cabinet staff, other meaningful figures in the community and the larger city.

That has been interesting. That's always been interesting because as you know from ushering in the coffee hour and so forth, you may run into literally a cabinet member one moment and the next moment just a...I shouldn't say just, but a local resident.

It's had a fascinating draw. That's always made life here in the church community interesting, intriguing, and fun. I'd say that would be the one thing I would say that has remained constant.
Glenn: Particularly, following up on that, when you think about the things that have happened in the nation or in the world over that same period of time, early '60s until now. Anything in particular that you can think of where the church and that have had some interaction or some connection?

Berkeley: The church has played a role in bringing measured stability to life. During the 1968 riots and turmoil in the city through the Vietnam era and all the way up through 9/11. I'm sure I'm missing a number of other historical events, but those are significant events in our history. The church was always an anchor. A source of stability. A source of calmness.

The pastors that were the rectors at the time were a source of stability there. When I think about all those years and all those events the church really, as you would expect, served that role admirably during those times.

Glenn: I remember both your mother and father very, very well. When I first started coming to church here in the '70s, they were both still very active and took a leading role in a lot of ways.

You were growing up in a family that was very connected to the parish. I remember at least one of your sisters who was still coming here when I first started to come. I don't think the other was at that point. They'd moved farther away into Virginia.

Thinking of your own family and then the family of your birth, do you have any particular thoughts about what the church has been in all of your lives really?

Berkeley: It was a very central, if not the most central, part of my parent's lives. It was a foundation block for them. Not all, of course, but a large part of their network of friends was based here in Christ Church.

Both my parents were far more gregarious than I am. They were very active in every aspect of the church. My father was down here routinely. He was at the SEC for most of his career. But when he was not working he was doing something for the church.

He was either serving on the vestry or he was participating in the Men's Guild which was a Monday night meeting as I recall between 7:00 and 9:00 of various men who were members that met in the woodworking shop in the basement of the church for decades.

My mother was very active in running The Opportunity Shop here because her career was essentially in retail. She had been in her younger years a model and had gotten interested in fashion. Ended up being a buyer for a retail women's dress shop here in Georgetown. Had been to New York quite a bit.

She had some retail experience so she tried to help The Opportunity Shop with that. Ran that actually all the way up until she ultimately just became too sick to run it and had to hand it off.

The church was definitely a central part of our life, there's no question about it. As I say, a real foundation block for them, no doubt about it.
Glenn: You mentioned growing up exploring the church. I've heard other people who are more or less your age who grew up here say exactly the same thing including Dr. Anschutz's son, Mark. Is he about your age or is he a little bit younger?

Berkeley: I think he probably is. I'm 59 now. He may be about the same age.

Glenn: There must have been quite a group of you, actually.

Berkeley: Yeah, it was like the church gang. We used to run around. It was really fun. We attended Sunday School together. Many of us in those days we sang in the choir.

We didn't have the professional choir that we do today, so I'm sure it was not as good. Nonetheless, there was a very cohesive group of us who ran around.

Glenn: Are there any people in particular that you remember through all of your time here, outside of your own family of course, but just in the congregation that you have reactions to or thoughts about or memories of?

Berkeley: That's a great question. As important as this experience was here, I don't have any relationships with those people at this point. Almost everybody seems to have moved away or moved into other areas of the country.

All those people that used to be in my Sunday School class, I couldn't tell you where they are. I'd love to actually look at an old directory and revisit those names again. Unfortunately, to this day I don't have any connection with any of those folks.

We all went to different school which was very typical, by the way. Growing up here, unfortunately, the DC public school systems were not an option. All of us scattered as a result to St. Albans or Landon or St. Stevens or any of these.

[inaudible 17:45] a whole list of private schools. As a result, it split us up and so we didn't really retain those connections that we had established in Sunday School and church here.

Glenn: You've experienced Christ Church at every stage pretty much in your life, from child to young adult to young father, older father. How have those changes in your life translated into how you've related to the church?

Berkeley: I would say the church has remained a central part of our lives to the extent of we were raising our children. After that, it became a little less central. I've seen that happens to others. I don't know, but that's been our experience.

More recently, as we have found ourselves as empty nesters here in Washington. I may have mentioned to you, we've got a place up in Fauquier County, a farm out there. We tend to move our focus out there and we're spending a lot more time out there. That's been our experience.

Glenn: Is there anything else that you'd like to observe? Any other thoughts, any other comments you'd like to make?
Berkeley: No, nothing. I don't think anything in particular as I step back and look at the church. Through some of other my activities, I have some exposure to some of the other religious institutions here in Washington.

It does seem to me that this parish is not unlike others. It's got a little bit of a cycle of high point to a pinnacle of membership level. It drops off, and then it...It's a bit of an up and down, not unlike the economy, I suppose.

I think that's true of the Sunday school as well. You get a plush of families in and then that tails off as they go through their normal life cycle like ours.

A lot of the religious institutions are trying to figure out ways to smooth that cycle out and retain a steady membership. You look back historically and it's always been like that. It's just part of the rhythm of the life of the community.

We got a great new rector. Tim is absolutely terrific and he's got some terrific staff. I'm confident that all of that will smooth out as time goes on.

Glenn: Thank you very much. Anything else?

Berkeley: No.

Glenn: Thank you, Berk.

Berkeley: Glad to do it.