This interview of the Rev. Stuart Kenworthy was recorded on June 12, 2018, by parishioner Tom Birch in connection with the Bicentennial Celebration of Christ Church Georgetown.

**Tom Birch:** This is Tom Birch. I'm here with Stuart Kenworthy at St. David's. We're meeting on the afternoon of June 12. We're going to talk about Stuart's life at Christ Church. Stuart, I was a parishioner when you came.

**Reverend Stuart Kenworthy:** Yes, you were.

**Tom:** I would like to know because I didn't know at the time, what drew you to Christ Church, what your first impressions were of that place.

**Reverend Kenworthy:** Let me tell you how I was introduced to Christ Church. I was in New York City. I was working as an assisting priest at St. Thomas Fifth Avenue. It was my second parish in New York. The 19th rector, the Reverend Sanford Garner, came to New York for the ordination of a young man who grew up in Christ Church at All Saints Church over by Bloomingdales.

The next day Sanford came to St. Thomas and worshipped. We had met there before, but we talked further. He said to me at one point, "How would you feel about leaving New York and coming to Washington?" I was very happy at St. Thomas. It was a very special place to be.

It was soaring liturgy with one of the finest choirs in the world. I had a full portfolio of ministry to do. I said to him, "I'd be open to that, I suppose."

When he got back to Washington, he contacted me, and he wanted to bring me in and show me the parish. What he wanted me to do is come and be one of his assistants. I did go down to see Christ Church. He told me about being an assistant. I said, "I just don't think that makes sense." He also said he would be retiring probably in a couple of years.

I didn't think it made sense to uproot from New York with Fran and our two small children, to go there only then to have to uproot again, so we put down, off the burners, but that's when I saw Christ Church for the first time.

When I walked in, Tom, as many people I've have noted this over the years that I've taken over there for the 23 years I was there, showing people the church, it brought me into a silence. Just to stop in my tracks, and take it in. It looked to me like a small cathedral. The very high ceiling, the interplay of stone, and wood was captivating, beautiful stained-glass windows, a high ceiling.
It had a very high ceiling, it does, but along the sides of the church, there are these stone columns, Romanesque stone columns, that support these lower-slung Gothic arches. What happens is, it draws in. It's got a very high ceiling, kind of cathedral-like, but there's a sense of intimacy that comes across.

At that time, there was red carpet, running all the way up the central aisle and up the sides, and that probably added to that kind of warm intimacy feeling.

The chapel was the exact opposite. White wash walls, very monastic in feel, very simple design, but beautiful. Of course, the rectory was very special, because we had dinner I think there. That's how I met Christ Church. When he announced his retirement, you want to hear how I got there then?

When he announced his retirement, it was shortly after that I was informed, "Your name has been placed as a candidate for rector." This is true, because Mr. Glenn Metzdorf, who was the administrator at Christ Church, was the head of the search committee. I hired Glenn as the administrator about 23 years ago. There were 230 some names submitted to be rector.

A lot of that was vetted on paper. I have never before that or after that heard of anything like that in my life. 230 names. It was about a year or so long process. We got down to six of us. They sent a visiting team to St. Thomas Fifth Avenue, then we were down to the final five or six. They brought each of us in for two days.

Lots of meetings, lunches, and interviews. After that, it was about four weeks later that I was called and invited to become the rector of Christ Church, Georgetown. I was at that point 39 years old and I accepted immediately. It was one of the happiest times of my whole life, with all that ensued.

**Tom:** For 23 years you were our rector?

**Reverend Kenworthy:** 23 years, two months and two days.

[laughter]

**Tom:** Well, there you are. Over that period of time, how did you see yourself evolving and growing, both personally and spiritually? You were a young man then, you still are, but nonetheless, there's room for us to grow continually. How is Christ Church in that for you?

**Reverend Kenworthy:** Let me say that my first day at Christ Church was officially to be September 1st, 1991. I was called late in May to be the rector, so there was a three-month lag time there.

I did make several trips up over the summer to try to orient myself, and I was given sheaves of paper to prep myself on, in terms of the life of the parish. I remember being
back in what's now one of those godly playrooms in the parish house. It was a library then, and I remember in this...

**Tom:** We do have godly play you know.

[laughter]

**Reverend Kenworthy:** Yes, we do. I was going to be going out to dinner that evening, but I was standing there around six o'clock, the sun was low coming through the windows. I was thinking, "What have I got myself into?" This is a big thing to pull forward, the Church.

I arrived in September, and one of the first things I want to do is learn about the liturgies and how they go. I was walked through them. At that point, there was only one assisting priest, and she was having some medical issues. Her name was Timmy Shanahan.

It was pretty much me in the beginning. The parish was immediately embracing and welcoming. It is was a very different parish then than it is now, or it was ten years after I got there.

**Tom:** Do you recall what the size of the congregation was when you arrived?

**Reverend Kenworthy:** It was probably about 850 or something like that. The average Sunday attendance at that point was about 225, 240, somewhere in there, year to year.

**Tom:** Compared to what, when you left?

**Reverend Kenworthy:** When I left, we've been over 400 a Sunday for probably 15 years. These things go up and down. If you want a snapshot of the congregation, a lot of people who had lived in Georgetown a long time, or Washington, and had been a part of Christ Church for a long time. I buried a lot of those people.

It was a passing generation of old-school Georgetowners, people who owned individual shops in Georgetown, people like Dorothy Steadbow and Minnie Mimi Crocker. I mean, there's a whole fleet of these people. It was a privilege to know them.

Peabos Ake Welltree was another. She died a week after I got there. As did Sanford Garner's predecessor, John Hanshew's Anschutz died, maybe in my first week or two while the rector, he was my first burial I think.

**Tom:** That's significant.

**Reverend Kenworthy:** Yeah. Just a little bit of a profile on the parish, there were about 30 kids or so in the Sunday school at that point. I really took the first year to take a real good look at the place before I just started trying to move the furniture around, and begin to build this out.
Tom: One thing that did happen was literally moving the furniture around. [laughs] You want to talk a little bit about the extraordinary renovation and historic preservation aspects of that? How that initiated and how it was carried out?

Reverend Kenworthy: I will. I got there in 1991. This renovation was completed in 2003. We started to consider this in the year 2000. Right around in there. I remember exactly where I was. I was at dinner with Guy and Ellen Martin. Guy Martin is an architect. They're both long-time parishioners, leaders in the parish.

Terry and Beth Collins. The six of us were having dinner at the Martin's home. I gently brought up the idea of a church restoration/renovation. It became the topic of dinner from then on. That was where the seed was planted. They helped me carry that, if you will, to the vestry.

The vestry listened to all of this. Some of these details are a little hazy right now. We did form two groups to investigate this possibility. One was a restoration committee, a renovation committee. The other one was the capital campaign committee, of which you were a part.

I'll speak to that in a minute. It was clear to me and it became clear to others that this was long overdue. The fabric of the space was suffering. It had wearing carpets. Underneath the wearing carpets were original broken tiles. The wood damage on the reredos, the pews, and the floors was pretty extensive. There was sub-par lighting. Sound needed to be fixed. There was a bad sound system.

The organ was breaking all the time and the stained-glass windows were deteriorating. It had been a long time, since these or any of these other issues had been addressed. These two groups went to work on it. I'll just tell you, for a matter of archives, who was on that committee to renovate, was Guy Martin, who's an architect.

Mary Weinman, who has great taste in the arts and design. Michael Lindstrom, who was our parish organ's choirmaster, who has knowledge of music, sound, and electronic systems. He just had a gift for that. Glenn Metzdorf, who was a parish administrator and archivist, has a great historical perspective.

Dodge Thompson, who was head of -- and still is head of -- exhibitions at the National Gallery of Art. John Richardson, who was a builder.

Tom: Great team.

Reverend Kenworthy: It was a great team. We kept it small, but that did not mitigate that we had differences of opinion all along the way, and we did. Guy Martin was masterful at moving those conversations along. That's why I appointed him to be head of the search committee for my successor, because he had that gift to do that. Along with Susan Davies.
Anyway, this group got together. They were considering all the things that could be done. There was a difference between a renovation and a restoration. We were trying to find out where we were on that equation. Would it be just pure restoration or would we bring some things into the 2000's that needed to be done? We did some of both, is what we did.

The other part was the capital campaign committee. This is a historical thing that should be noted. I can't really remember all the members on that, or many at all, actually. There was a larger committee. Except that Jay Costen Costan was the chair. Marshall Ginn, a parishioner, was on it. Tom, you were on it.

**Tom:** Howard Smith was also on it.

**Reverend Kenworthy:** Howard Smith. That's all retrievable. It's a matter of archives. What I want to mention for the purposes of this oral history is that in the midst of that planning process for how we would launch and execute a capital campaign, 9/11 happened. The bombing of the World Trade Center, Pentagon, Pennsylvania, all of that.

In an instant, everything changed. In America and in Washington, and for our purposes, what we were going to be doing in terms of this project. We had a long and searching discussion. We had actually met to discuss just that, do we go forward or not?

What I want to say here is that I have a vivid memory of you, Tom Birch, turning the tide on that conversation. We had been talking for 30 or 40 minutes. There was a difference of opinion. Whether we should pause it and restart it another time, or go forward, and other scenarios in between.

You are the one that spoke up and said, "This is going to be a matter of faith and our belief that we can trust in God. We think we are about a good thing here and we should not stop. We should push forward in faith."

That's what we did. It all worked, because we needed to raise $3 million plus. 890 thousand of which were used to restore the windows over eight- or nine-month period, and all of the other work that had to be done.

For about a couple of months during that time, the church was...I wouldn't say gutted, but you had to walk on planks and you were looking down into the undercroft of the church into the dirt cellar. It was basically completely torn up.

Every fabric and surface was addressed, some historically. We did paint studies to try to get back to original paint colors. We moved the baptismal font from a corner to the center of the aisle, so it was juxtaposed to the altar at the sanctuary of the church, and put them on stone plinths.

Restored the pews, the reredos, all the wood floors. The hanging lanterns, we took them down to get them restored. We realized they were so damaged and so cheap that we just...
couldn't put them back up. Once when we got them down, we all looked up into that space, and we go, "My goodness."

This is how it looked originally when there were gas jets up there lighting the blazing candles. We decided quietly to put the hanging lanterns in a room downstairs or upstairs in the attic. We did get people saying to us, "When are they coming back?" "We'll let you know." [laughs]

The same is with the carpet. We took the carpet up and we retiled all the floors with Minton tile in the UK.

Tom: We went to England to get...

Reverend Kenworthy: We had a representative. We told them what we had. They go, "We still have the same tile." [laughs] They sent it over. We retiled with the original design of that tile on the floor. Where people were jarred by that a little bit is the footfall. The key sound of heels. People were would adjust to that.

Just like when you put a new paint on something, it really gets your attention. It quiets down. People learn to adjust footfall or just get used to the alive sound in there.

Tom: Anyway, the stained glass windows, they were sent away for repair?

Reverend Kenworthy: They were. Art Femenella, he's done a tremendous amount of work across the country. Actually, even out of the country. Mostly in the United States. He's located in New Jersey. He has his artisan shop and studios. They would come take a window or two, and take it away, and then bring it back and reinstall it.

That process took about eight or nine months. It was about close to $900,000 to do that.

Tom: It's very impressive. Just the level of detail and searching for absolutely the right artisan and manufacturer to get the work done.

Reverend Kenworthy: Can I say something about...? This could be rearranged on the oral history, but you were asking about how coming to Christ Church touched our lives.

Tom: Mm-hmm.

Reverend Kenworthy: The first thing I'm going to say is that the people of Christ Church, and that's always a fluid thing, who they are. We're moving through the river of life. They could not have been more welcoming and warm. When we first arrived in Washington, my wife, Fran, had been diagnosed with some growth in her abdomen.

I only found out about it near the end of this time period, just before we were coming. Once we got here, we had to go straight into a pre-surgical mode. The parish just embraced us in that process. Charlie Rackley, who's a physician at Georgetown at that time, now retired, took charge of everything.
The parish embraced us in that whole process. It was a lot of stress to move your young family here and start a new whole position, and then to have this go on. It all worked out fine. I want to say that the people of Christ Church, it's an extraordinary parish community.

It was my entire 23 years, these good people of Christ Church taught me and us as a family in so many ways, how to live, how to trust, how to be faithful, how to die. Therefore, how to live. Almost, I've been overwhelmed. It's been an ongoing state of gratitude to be a part of that parish family, that parish community.

The other component of that were the clergy that I hired over the years. I didn't have all that many, because one thing I do have a gift on, and is about the only one I will ever hold up, is I know how to pick good people too. It started with Lupton Abshire, who was coming out of seminary and I went to Rita Henninger after that.

Both of those clergy were with me for 10 years each. It was from there on to a number of other clergy. Tom Murphy, Deirdre Aikin, Christopher Garcia, Lyndon Shakespeare, all gifted clergy who I was privileged to work with, and to help, to mentor and would turn to them often.

We also expanded to two assisting clergy at that point, that we would become a team that would model for the parish, how we should be with one another. I got along with all of them very, very well. In fact, my last two clergy, Kristen Hawley and Elizabeth Keeler, that was one of my best parting gifts to the church on the way out. They're both five-star clergy.

All of them have stayed in touch with me over the years. We get together when they're in Washington. I'm still good friends with Kristen Hawley and Elizabeth Keeler. The kind of loyalty we had for one another. I picked people who were true believers and who were passionate about parish ministry.

Who could command the faith live within them in their unique ways. Who could be a team player, but also take direction.

Who could work on their own, but stay connected to me. Frankly, they had to have a really good sense of humor. They all did. We could laugh at ourselves and we can laugh at each other. It was a joy to work with those clergy. They were formative for me as well. The last thing I had as a requirement was, they had to be low maintenance and low drama.

[laughter]

Reverend Kenworthy: They all were. If they came to me with problems, they always had solutions in tow. There we are.
Tom: I have to say that that sense of unity and friendship shines through to those of us sitting in the pews when you clergy were there on Sundays for us. It's a wonderful thing, because it was such an important part of us coming there.

Reverend Kenworthy: It was, and the clergy appreciated this. I know I did. The parish did. Is that my vision for the place, really, was very simple. Everything we do begins and ends in prayer, which is ways in worship and prayer. All else is subtext. That was the emphasis. You build around that the major engines of the church.

Which are, for clergy, especially, pastoral care of the people that God has put in your care. To care for them. To guide them. To care about the state of their souls and their spiritual lives, and all their lives. Institutionally, then it's mission and outreach, adult education and spiritual formation for adults, and youth and family ministry.

Those three things surround that heart, which is prayer and worship. Institutionally, what we did, and it took me a few years to get this going, was we began to pray the monastic offices. Which is Anglicanism's gift to Christianity in some ways, a unique gift. The prayer offices of morning prayer, or noonday prayer, or evening prayer.

There were others, but those are the major ones for us that mark the time and the day. It took me years to walk work them in. My whole philosophy about building a place is not to just get it and rip it out and start over. It's to build brick by brick. We started with some evening prayer two days a week and we moved to five days a week.

We started morning prayer. In the end, we were doing morning prayer, noon day prayer, evening prayer, every day. Morning prayer on Saturday. Of course, Sunday was Sunday. It was a building process. What it did is it signaled to the church that vision I had, which was, this is the heart of our life.

Relationship with God through prayer and worship, and we'll go from there. That permeated the time. It was very important to me in my own spirituality.

Tom: You mentioned 9/11. That became a factor in your life and ours.

Reverend Kenworthy: Everybody.

Tom: Especially, after the war in Iraq was launched. You came to us and told us of the calling you had. Can you tell us how that came about? If you like, some of your experience there. Definitely, how it came to you on your return to the parish, because you go and go away, and come back with a whole new set of life experiences, and how that informed your being engaged in that special ministry.

Reverend Kenworthy: Before I ever got to Christ Church, on a couple of occasions, I investigated military service in a reserve duty capacity. They were derailed, because of life circumstances. In 1994, I took one last run at it. It had to work this time or it wasn't going to, because I was over age. I actually had to get an age waiver.
In 1994, I was sworn in as a second lieutenant in a chaplain in the DC Army National Guard. At that time, it was about 90 percent African American. It was important for me for that reason that I didn't want to serve God and our country. Another factor was that it was the flip side of Georgetown.

Georgetown and Christ Church is one of the most highly-educated, affluent. Not monolithically, the church. Highly-educated, affluent, and colorful in some ways, with all the people in the church. This was a way of reaching to another side of the community of Washington and the enlisted soldiers of the DC Army National Guard.

I went in and the church was very supportive of that. It wasn't an honors duty. It took me about a weekend and month away, usually four-day AP Hill, Virginia. Two weeks every year in the summer, both in the United States. We would go to Italy, or Panama, or other places.

As I said, 9/11 happened and everything changed in the United States, and the military, and the DC Guard. The nature and scope of our mission in the DC Guard within the first five or six years after 9/11, we had over 20 deployments already out of the DC Army National Guard.

I was a part of the 372nd Military Police Battalion. I was their chaplain. We were mobilized in 2005 and '06 to go to Iraq. I'll just say very briefly, it was a very high stretched time there in 2005 and '06 and '07.

Our battalion strength was about 1,200 troops, but the part from DC was just 70. We were the commanding withdrawal. All these other companies from all over the United States, who are US soldiers serving in Italy or whatever, were attached to us in Baghdad in Camp Liberty.

There were 1,200 of us. We weren't all in Baghdad. I had troops in what they call the Sunni Triangle -- Fallujah, Ramadi, Taji. Some other forward operating bases, but we were spread across that Sunni Triangle.

I was their chaplain. To all of them, I had to try to get to them. I remember senior chaplain saying to me at one point, "Try to fly if you can to stay off the roads." I'm not going to go in any detail about our mission. I could, but it's just not what you need to here hear in this presentation.

My troops were what they called breaking the wire, leaving the safety and security of the posts where they were to go out from these posts to do our mission. Many or most of them were under fire many days a week, so it was a really high-stressed time.

What I asked the parish to do on my way out was to support this. I am fully cognizant that there was an array of opinions about what we were doing, and when I came back what we were still doing, and now even the aftermath of what was done there in Iraq.
Even with that, I asked them to support this ministry to the troops. That's where my focus was, not in the macro picture. Not that I didn't think about it, but that wasn't what my mission was as a chaplain or my focus.

It was to support these soldiers in a time of high stress. As we say in the chaplaincy, to care for the living, to nature nurture the wounded, and to honor the dead. As a chaplain there, I covered all three of those phases.

**Tom:** Stuart, there I was, senior warden when you left.

**Reverend Kenworthy:** Yes, you were, Tom. You were very supportive. Thank you.

**Tom:** Thank you. [laughs] There were those on the vestry who thought we should vote, whether or not we could let you go. I said no. I said, "Stuart has a call, and we can't stand between him and that." There was agreement to that.

**Reverend Kenworthy:** Thank you, Tom. I really appreciate it. I do remember that now. I remember your time as senior warden. I had misplaced that over at Iraq, but I remember our conversations now. You're bringing this back to me. [laughs]

These memories can get hazy, but it was really important. When I came back, Tom, you were so supportive and asking me, "How did it go?" You want to talk about whatever. I really appreciate that and I thank you for your leadership at that time.

You helped the parish to send me off in the right way and receive me back again. It was a really important thing for me in my life. I have been grateful ever since I had that opportunity to do that. Anyway, we were in that together.

**Tom:** Absolutely. It was an extraordinary opportunity for you and a blessed way to serve. [laughs] Actually, you touched on the makeup of the parish. Really, you're highly visible in the City of Washington I think. There are a fair number of parishioners who are involved at various levels in government service.

I worked on the hill Hill and lobby lobbied for years. [laughs] There are those who were on either side of that kind of job description. I would be interested, if you could talk just a little bit of -- we've had members of Congress in our parish as regular congregants -- just what's your experience was.

If you're expected of the kind of leadership that you'd be offering to individuals who are highly engaged politically in the important levels of government. Making the decisions that the nation is dependent upon.

**Reverend Kenworthy:** Absolutely. I had a very vague notion of that when I arrived. With every passing year, I had a greater and deeper appreciation for the people who were in those pews every week, who wanted to be in a relationship with the good Lord, who wanted to be in community and found Christ Cchurch to be a parish home for them.
As I mentioned before I it was highly educated, highly affluent, very influential. In the end, the way I saw this was we are all going to get out of bed in the morning. We were all in need of God's love, and mercy, and compassion.

That doesn't matter who you are or what side of the political are you. Jesus's Kingdom was not of this world. In a sense, we were supra-political. We were biblical. In the parish life, in the life of the church, the core part of our identity was being children of God.

People reconciled by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That was our identity. When we talk about being Christ's heart and hands in the world, we might have different ideas about what that means. When we talk of trying to be bearers of God's justice and compassion. We might have different ideas about what that means.

The prior identity is the most important part of our identity, as a parish family, as a community of faith, is our oneness in Christ. Somehow, I was able to sort of, in leading the parish I should say. I didn't do this. To communicate to people wherever you are on a social-political spectrum, you're below to God and we're in this together.

I had this wonderful snapshot, I've told this so many times, of how this worked. It was during a Eucharist at 11:00 AM 11:15, we move that service to 11:15. The senior counsel to President George Bush at that Saudi-Iraq war, C. Boyden Gray, on his knees at the communion rail.

The person administering Charles whom I saw was, because I was handling a sacred vessel. I was sitting in the Sedalia seats. I looked down the rail and there was a senior counsel to President Barack Obama administering the chalice. I thought, there it is. In a picture, this is what we are able to do here at Christ Church, when we have Howard however widely divergent opinions and could be well-articulated opinions. On the bottom line, this is medicine for the soul. This is being filled with the love of Christ in the sacrament of Holy Communion. This is us as a community of faith.

We have an identity prior to what is our political identity. Now, there we are.

Tom: That is very powerful. I think those of us who are parishioners in Christ Church, appreciate the way in which we come together, as Christians loving Jesus as one. It's truly a sanctuary.

Reverend Kenworthy: It is. It's not one we hide in, but it's one...There's this expression on the neighboring church door. The liturgy is over and now the service begins. We are to be strengthened and filled with Christ transforming love, only to try to manifest that in every corner of our life. From our homes, and to our workplaces, to whatever we do in life. To be an ambassador, if you will, for Christ.
As I said, the harmony in the community and the desire where I was proceeding was to the desire of Christ church Church persons to want to get their own water and roll in the same direction for God was powerful.

It's not that we never had problems, but they were very settled around home making. They would serve visitors of your will. We had a few episodes where we had it all around as a vestry and work some things out.

In the mean, in my overall memory of vision, an extraordinary place of a perished parish community. I mean it in a way that not is bragging or anything, but it's an extraordinary place. It's really one of the finest parishes in the United States. It does have a reputation beyond what I even knew at the time.

**Tom:** [laughs] When we travel around these other churches on Sundays and other places, I always introduced myself like, "I'm Tom Birch from Christ Church, Georgetown." And they said, "Oh, yes." [laughs] Or, they would know you too. It really does speak to that level of, I think of commitment that gives us the visibility.

**Reverend Kenworthy:** I agree, I totally agree. I was in a college colleague group with ten other directors for large Washington churches, because I knew I couldn't go to their churches. I lived in a bubble as the Christ Church, Georgetown.

We would share case studies for years. This college colleague group is now at its 40th year. I was in a free team, but we would share confidentiality things we were facing in the parish.

There were times when I was hearing stories of what happened in another parish of large grouping the size in the chair. I mean it was just unbelievable to me, and I felt extraordinarily fortunate to be at Christ Church.

There was harmony and peace about the place. I would wonder and worry at times like, "Do we have our hands heads in the sand or something or are we not looking at things closely enough to feel alone to get along?"

In the end, I don't think that was the case. I think it was an extraordinary place. At times, I always say those 23 years was were the hardest life for us as a family of four when we arrived, and our daughter Margret Grace was born in the parish when we arrived after we arrived.

The next year we built it, now we're the family of the parish, the leadership. We built the place out and I told you that 35 kids in the Sunday school.

It the peak we had, 238 registered on Sunday school, teens and youth and family ministries which was just a wonderful thing to see happening and this goes through cycles.
It's not always going to be there, but it was then, and I know towards the last eight years of my time there maybe, it dawned on me that this was my life's work.

I had prepared for years before hand, before I even knew there was Christ Church for this work. It was also important work of my life and ministry, and I'm just enormously grateful to God for having been there.

Tom: I want to ask you one of the questions and that's about what you touched on, which is taking the liturgy up in to the community.

I wonder if you could just talk a little bit about how the outreach in the mission of Christ Church developed during those 23 years that you were there.

You've been in evolution there and some very nice direction.

Reverend Kenworthy: I will. When I got there, Mission was always important to Christ Church, but the scale and proportion of that was on the smaller side. There was the favor of four or five things that came up every year, because somebody on the committee had an attachment to it.

It got refunded, but it didn't really make that much difference to the church as a whole. We began to redesign and started in earnest under Rita Henninger when she came to attach the parish and the people of the parish to these missions and ministries as we were a part of. Whether they were international, or national, or regional or local.

That got started. The expansion of that committee, the expansion of people's stewardship and giving to that increased. That made a big difference. It became quite a vital part of the parish. We were looked to as a leader within the diocese in that way.

The other vision I had for the parish is, we come together to be blessed in order to go out and be a blessing to others. It's a pulse of life that at the ground level, on a day-to-day basis, we encountered in the prayer offices. There's a weekly pulse and cycle to that.

For others, it's a longer pulse. They don't come two or three months. Still, they're welcome, they're there. We invite them to be a part of that parish family. That pulse of life to become in God's presence intentionally, to be blessed in order to go out and be a blessing to others for God.

I think my later years there, that this really came into fruition under Rita, Tom Murphy and others, and the late leaders and parishioners who supported this. I could say one thing more about that. One of the first things that I ever heard when I came to Christ Church in 1991 was, "We need to build some bridges across the Anacostia. We're isolated."

That was realized along the way in a beautiful way, with the inception of the Bishop Walker School for Boys in Ward Eight, which is now in its 10th year. Christ Church has been enormously supportive of this miracle that unfolded before us in the Bishop Walker School.
When I was leaving, the warden said to me, "How should we honor your time with us these in these 23 years?" I said, "Could we just have a fundraising drive?" Not a capital campaign. Keep it off the stewardship campaign of the parish church. Do it from post-Easter to August; it can be done. Just have a fundraising drive for Bishop Walker School. That's what I'd like to do to honor my time here.

At the end of that, when it was closed off in August, we were going to make a...I asked Maria Walker, the widow of Bishop John Walker, the first African American bishop in the Diocese of Washington, to please, would she come to Christ Church on a Sunday in September? I asked James Woody, who was the director of the school, to come.

Out of the generosity of the hearts of the people of Christ Church, I was able to hand a check to Maria, for $268,000.

Tom: Wow. [laughs]

Reverend Kenworthy: I thought to myself, "I'd like to retire two or three more times."

[laughter]

Reverend Kenworthy: Anyway, it was the most beautiful way to go to say goodbye to one another as parish and priest. By the way, the way I always saw myself at Christ Church was, I am their pastor, priest, and rector, in that order. That was a driver for me in my ministry. Pastoral prayer was paramount.

The liturgy, no. I had come from St. Thomas, 5th Avenue. I was a Methodist before I came into the Episcopal Church. To get formed at St. Thomas, it was a perfect fit to come to Christ Church, because we had a very, very good choir.

It was a very lower church. We didn't have Eucharistic vestments. Cassock circles installed for Communion. A lot of morning prayer. I didn't rip that out and do a whole new program. Little-by-little, we moved that up.

If you go to Christ Church towards the end of my time there, my last 10 years at least, maybe even 12 or 14 years, or go now, it's a very different place in that way. People, they love it. It's a wonderful place to worship and to be in community. I don't know if I answered your question. [laughs]

Tom: Sure, you did, beautifully. True. We all love it and we loved you for giving your 23 years to us in service.

Reverend Kenworthy: Thank you very much, Tom.

Tom: Thank you, too.