



*Seeking. Living. Sharing Christ*

# Christ Church Chronicle

**Christ Episcopal Church**  
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## **For Your Calendar**

**Every Saturday:** 12:00-12:05, A Musical Moment — A brief organ concert for everyone to enjoy

**Sunday, June 7:** 10:00 a.m., Youth Sunday with Praise Band. F. Nash commemoration and a Parish Picnic in Cooper Park

**Sunday, June 21:** 11:30 a.m., French Library rededication

**Sunday, June 28:** F. Sam and Edith's last Sunday

**Wednesday July 8:** 199<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the consecration of Christ Church

## **From the Rector**

Dear Friends,

*"The Lord watch between you and me, when we are absent one from another."* Gen.31:49b

So said Laban to Jacob when they parted, leaving Laban's daughters, grandchildren and flocks in Jacob's care. And so say Edith and I as we prepare to leave Christ Church at the end of June. We thank you (and God) for calling us to serve this beautiful church in a beautiful village in a beautiful part of the world. I had thought my career was ending permanently in 2004 but you have provided an exciting epilogue.

We especially want to thank you for your hospitality. When we arrived on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004 at the gatehouse it had been transformed. Six weeks earlier, when we first saw it, there was a pile of trash in the living room, bedrooms painted in bizarre colors and other signs of neglect. But you had been busy and the place shone with fresh paint, floor polish and general cleanliness. There was even a stack of fire wood on the porch. It all said, "Welcome!", loudly and clearly.

Then, as we unpacked, food and flowers began to arrive to encourage the weary travelers. Please make sure the Michaels get the same welcome. Like us, they will never forget it.

When we moved into the rectory in June of 2005, nineteen cars turned out and what we thought would take six hours was accomplished in two. You even moved the woodpile - bless you!

So these memories will last. And the Abbotts will return. We have purchased a niche in the columbarium wall - what better place to wait in hope than the Christ Church churchyard? On judgment day, when body and soul are reunited I hope the first thing I see is Christ Church still standing - and standing, for the Gospel.

Thank you all and goodbye.

Faithfully,

(the Rev.) Sam Abbott, XXI Rector.



## *Thanks and Praise*

We thank you, O Lord:

- For five years of faithful ministry among us by Sam and Edith Abbott;
- For Linda VanCleaf's loving service to our church school;
- For new and continuing leadership chosen by our annual meeting;
- For Marly Miller's creative editing of the Chronicle over the past eight years;
- For Vicky Hunter's internship with us and her ordination as a deacon on May 30<sup>th</sup>.
- For Grace Welsh's leadership of the Altar Guild for eighteen years;
- For all our liturgical ministers who serve faithfully Sunday by Sunday;
- For the newly baptized: Payton Whiteman, Elizabeth Tooley, Mike and Bryan Stringer; Becket Toulson
- For Martin Tillapaugh's cheerful and caring service as senior warden;
- For Teri Barown and Janice Brenner's patient listening and hard work as vestry persons on our behalf.



**From the Editor:**

### *About this issue of the Chronicle*

In this special issue you will find recollections of Fr. Sam and Edith from our Wardens and others, some focusing on the small, telling detail and some attempting to sum up the Abbott era at Christ Church. Reading them over may bring up your own sharp memories of this short but rich set of years. Like me, you may find something amusing—I laughed when encountering a certain familiar football—and remember something poignant. I recalled the origami flowers that my daughter made in lieu of place cards for a dinner party several years ago, and how my youngest boy wrote Edith the Kind inside the one meant for Edith Abbott's place. Larger memories rose up: Father Sam's exacting care about every aspect of the church; his concern to help us fulfill our pledged work as volunteers; his love for language and beauty and history; and, most of all, his unshamed efforts to hurl into our hearts the piercing, overwhelming love of God.

In this issue, the illustrations are "stamp art" made with stamps from Edith Abbott's wonderfully large and varied collection. Some adults and children will remember stamping Christmas cards with her. Edith was a letterpress printer at the notable Firefly Press in Boston, Massachusetts, and at Lunenburg, Vermont's The Stinehour Press, the famous and award-winning printer-publisher in the domain of fine illustrated books.

Thanks to Rebecca Miller for doing the painstaking work of scanning these images.

And yes, I am still searching for a new editor! Please let me know if you are interested—The Chronicle is a fine way to meet people, and it is a noted Christ Church tradition begun by Father Birdsall. The last bishop pointed to our newsletter as the best in the diocese; let's continue that trend.

— Marly Y. Miller

## ***Music Notes:***

### ***Music Minutes, concert, and a farewell Sunday***

Seeing the village and surrounding countryside coming alive for the summer season, I have tried to be creative in planning Christ Church's summer music that will also be alive! Music Minutes will take place every Saturday between Memorial Day and Labor Day, and features a few short minutes of organ music at 12:00 noon in our church . . . for anyone who wishes to drop by. Why not stop for some inspiring moments after your visit to the Farmers' Market? This is a nice "free" activity to share with your summer visitors as well.



On Sunday June 21 at 3:00 p.m. our organist teams up again with Katie Boardman and will be in concert at the Old Palatine Church, Rt. 5, west of Nelliston. Look for the historic signs for the church. If you enjoyed Katie and Roberta in our Lenten Concerts, you will want to attend this. A great way to celebrate Father's Day afternoon.

Our choir will sing through the month of June with a special offering on June 28, Father Sam's "farewell Sunday." If you would like to be part of our musical tribute to Father Sam and Edith Abbott, please join us in choir rehearsals on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. beginning immediately!

— Roberta Rowland-Raybold, Organist/Choirmaster



## ***You are invited to join us: Hospice Presentation***

Christ Church Stephen Ministry will sponsor an informational meeting on Hospice, Thursday, June 11, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the parish dining hall. Our own George Seeley will speak about the program and the services available through Catskill Area Hospice & Palliative Care, Inc. What do you do when you learn a loved one is terminally ill or a friend tells you her mother is dying? It isn't easy to think or talk about terminal illness, but being informed can help. Please join us as we learn more about the special care that Hospice workers provide for patients and their care givers. George Seeley is a Social Worker with Catskill Area Hospice and is also a trained Stephen Minister. Catskill Area Hospice is one of the many outreach programs supported by Christ Church.

—Mary Bellew

## ***Father Sam as a Shepherd***

I consider myself fortunate that Father Sam was our rector during my tenure as a member of the vestry and as warden. Our frequent meetings, discussions and contacts have given me the privilege of getting to know him well. I learned long ago that many of us don't appreciate what we have until we no longer have it, and I know that all of us will miss Father's attributes when he retires.

I know that the congregation and vestry will miss his always-certain leadership. Few realize or appreciate the countless hours he has spent making sure that our church, its committees, and our daily services run efficiently and that the needs of the parishioners are met. Whether contributing his own time or funds to a project that he believes in (i.e. ecumenical youth group or outreach) or encouraging others to follow through on an idea, he is always willing to give something extra. Because of his attention to detail, his ability to keep a meeting focused and on track, his willingness to prod others to remain on task, or doing a job himself (as in the rearranging, culling, and cataloguing the library), Father was always focused on moving our church forward.

The vast majority of us will miss the easy manner in which he involved the children in his weekly children's sermons. I firmly believe that those sermons are wonderful lessons for us all. I still find it surprising to think that Father told the vestry, when he was asked to consider incorporating a children's sermon into the service, that he wasn't sure he could do a good children's sermon because he didn't have a lot of experience with them.

What special gift he has, and what a growing and learning experience for each of us those sermons have been.

A number of our members will miss his clear and evident love of the church, its history, its music, and its traditions. Many will miss his Lectionary and Bible classes. He is an exemplary teacher. He conveys his knowledge with ease, certainty, humor, and grace. I in particular will miss the attribute that I believe makes him a great teacher, his "fullness of faith." Because his faith is so clearly ingrained in most of what he does day in and day out, he simply and naturally leads and teaches by example. He is not one to say, "do as I say not as I do"; you can be certain of him when you follow his example! Think only of his wonderfully strong marriage to another of "his" great strengths, Edith, and you will understand what I mean. We have been absolutely blessed to have witnessed their special example of faith, love, and devotion both to each other and to the church.

I also know that we will miss what I believe is another of his great strengths, his pastoral care. He is absolutely tireless in his pastoral care duties. He is a note writer, and many have received and will now miss his notes of thanks or words of encouragement. He visits the sick, the dying, and the troubled regularly and often, and I have heard from many people how valuable those visits were. And to think that Father once modestly told the search committee that he wasn't sure if he would be particularly good at providing pastoral care because he hadn't had the opportunity to do much in the city!

Finally I would like to mention what is now an evident and overriding strength of Father Sam's, one that we will all miss and one that I am convinced none of us (Father Sam included) knew that he possessed - his adaptability. When you consider Father's background and experience in a large urban, traditional church, you have to marvel how well and quickly he has adapted to and become an integral part of our small church and rural community. He became connected and involved (Rotary and Ecumenical Youth Group), he "adapted" and welcomed new less traditional music (the Praise Band), he provided outstanding pastoral care to those in need, and he created wonderful children's sermons for all of us to remember. Let us pray that he not only adapts easily to retirement but that he continues to "adapt" and share his many gifts with others.

—Martin Tillapaugh, Senior Warden

## ***69 Fair Street***

69 Fair Street. It always bothered me that our address was invariably listed as 69 Fair Street. Twenty-some years ago, when Susan and I first visited Cooperstown and wanted to attend church, we checked the phone directory for Christ Church and it said: 69 Fair Street. We went to 69 Fair Street, a depressingly bland block of a building (complete with two signs identifying it as Christ Episcopal Church). Even though it was Sunday morning, we walked into a darkened corridor, thinking, "This doesn't seem like a church building". Well, eventually we found the real building where the service was to take place. But it was not the most auspicious welcome for a new family.

At some point upon becoming warden, I mentioned to Sam my frustration with "69 Fair Street." So he did something about it.

He contacted the folks who assign street addresses, and though he really wanted a more Biblical number, he arranged to have the church building assigned a street address on the actual street where it was located - River Street.

As new folks come to Christ Church, now they will be welcomed through our front door - the one on River Street. Thanks to Sam.

—Ralph Snell, Warden Emeritus

## ***Recollections of Father Sam and Edith***

I remember very well the first time that I met Father Sam and Edith. I was the senior warden at the time. They came in on a rather cold, dreary January day a little more than five years ago when Father Sam interviewed for the interim position. I was standing in the fellowship hall of the Church House when they pulled up in their car. They were both dressed for winter weather with warm hats and coats.

My first impression of them proved to be a true representation of them. After talking to them a few minutes, it was evident that here was a couple who cooperatively worked together for the Lord and His Church. They were not flamboyant folks but individuals who enjoyed getting to know people where "they are" and leading them in the faith. Indeed, that is the role that both have played while here at Christ Church.

Father Sam's sermons, the worship services, the quiet days, his Sunday School class, the Advent and Lenten Wednesday night events, and the Wednesday evening prayer group all have been oriented towards having us get to better know and understand what it means to be a follower of Christ as well to practice the disciplines of the faith. He has been responsive to different tastes in worship from the traditional to the more contemporary services led by the Joyful Noise Praise Band. He has been an advocate for Christian youth activities, first through the Ecumenical Youth Group and more recently with his assistance in establishing a Youth for Christ presence here in Cooperstown. Another ecumenical effort that both Sam and Edith have supported is the monthly healing service that is attended by people from many different denominations in the community. Both Sam and Edith have been excellent in calling on the sick and those in need of Christ's presence and love—individuals who have benefitted from their pastoral care will never forget that support during their time of stress.

Edith has been supportive of Father Sam in the work that he has done in so many ways. She has also been active in complementing the work of her husband. She has started a women's Bible study which meets one afternoon a week. My mother who recently came to live with us has been the beneficiary of this friendly group of women who study the Bible and discuss how the passages apply to one's life. That group has especially been helpful in making her feel welcome in a community where she has never lived. Edith emanates Christ's love, and that affects this group and others.

The Abbotts said to me that about six years ago they were considering taking early retirement from full-time Christian ministry. Then they felt called to come to Cooperstown, New York, for an interim ministry that turned into a call for Father Sam to become the permanent priest of Christ Church. We are so glad that they heeded the call to Cooperstown. They have not only done a tremendous job of teaching us various aspects of the Christian faith but also have modeled Christian behavior. We thank you for a job well done.

May the Lord continue to bless the ministry that you will continue as you "retire" from full-time ministry of a parish. We well know that you will be a wonderful Christian influence in the community where you are moving. We will indeed miss you.

—John Clow, Warden Emeritus

## ***Bible Fellowship with Edith***

Question is, how do we as Christians grow to be like Jesus? Maybe the nicest way is through Bible Study groups. That's why a group of us gathered at the rectory every Thursday, Bibles and study books in hand, ready to take on the lesson of the week. We shared refreshments and the expanding stories of our lives. We shared attitudes and points of view and previously-held concepts. We let the Word of God wind its way through all of these, changing, tweaking, affirming, and connecting. We let the Word of God in and let it operate, we grew to desire it in its shaping function, and we learned to trust one another. While all this was happening, we tried



to apply the Beatitudes to ourselves, to take the actual advice of Jesus to heart, to know a bit more thoroughly the cost to Jesus of our salvation and freedom, and to really love Him for it. We tried together to get a grip on His love, His forgiveness, His focus, His purpose. What more can you ask?

Well, we also have many lovely remembrances to keep in our hearts. Maggie, the Abbott's dog, gave everyone their fair share of affection, stretching out by the fire closer than we would have chosen. Decaf coffee in real cups smelled heavenly in January. The warmth of the crackling fire chased away winter chill, and the sharing of our problems, our blessings, and our prayers melted us together in the comradely of friendship.

Thank you, Edith. Your special gift for friendship, your hospitality, and your vibrant faith will sustain us for years to come.

—Anita Born and Roxie Hansel

## ***“His love of God”***

I have had an admiration for Father Abbott since the time when the vestry interviewed him to be our interim rector.

Father Sam is a person who is comfortable with who he is: a Christian; a priest; a pastor; a preacher; a husband; an intellect; a member of the community; and an administrator. He has exceeded the goals that were anticipated when he arrived at Christ Church: The Praise Band, the Legacy Society, the Lectionary series, and the children's sermons are only four examples. He has manifested growth, and his children's sermons are a testament to this.

Working with him is truly a pleasure. He can initiate discussions and participate in them without dominating with his point of view, and yet you usually know where he stands on an issue.

Fr. Sam's love of preaching is evident every time he steps into the pulpit. However, the thing that has impressed me even more is his ability to show his love of God by talking with God in spontaneous prayer. I consider Father Sam to be a good example of the Holy Spirit working through someone to bring God's love into the world.

We have been truly blessed to have him here at Christ Church. God Bless Father Abbott

—David W. Vaules, Warden Emeritus



## ***Edith, Music, and a football***

Edith is a wonderful person and there are many wonderful things to be said about her. She was a great help in finding two organists. To the choir she brings diplomacy, enunciation, and impeccable taste. But this already sounds too much like a letter of recommendation. I prefer this: one Sunday, between the Sacristy and the Parish Hall, between the 10 o'clock service and the social hour, Edith spied a young parishioner with a football. Without speaking she asked for the ball. She returned it with a near-perfect spiral – minimal arm motion, plenty of wrist, reminiscent of Namath releasing a short safety-valve pass behind the dwindling protection of Sherman Plunkett. Edith Abbott a jock! Who knew?

Edith touching all sorts of people. That we knew. That we'll miss.

—Keith Willcox

## *The Extra Mile*

Several years ago, Margaret Young asked if I was interested in attending a mid-week morning Eucharist. I said I was, but that I started work 8:30 am. She asked if I could make a 7:30 am service. "Yes, but there isn't one."

A few weeks later, Margaret told me that Fr. Sam agreed to a 7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist for us, every Wednesday. This service was in addition to his 8:00 a.m. Morning Prayer and regular 8:30 a.m. Wednesday Holy Eucharist. For the next year or so, we gathered every Wednesday morning in St. Agnes Chapel. Usually it was just the three of us, Fr. Sam, Margaret, and me. Occasionally, a tourist or another parishioner would join us. But for the most part, it was the three of us. When one of us couldn't make it, we numbered two. We hoped that others might find this early hour convenient and become part of our small congregation. It was not to be. So when Margaret moved away, Fr. Sam and I reluctantly decided to suspend that early morning service. We agreed that if we found someone to join us, we would re-convene. So far that hasn't happened. I miss the special peace those services brought me and the spiritual lift they provided out of the mid-week doldrums into which I often lapse. I am deeply grateful to Fr. Sam for faithfully providing the equivalent of a private worship service, complete with sermon and announcements. Sure, there were frigid winter mornings when I would have rather stayed in bed for an extra half-hour. But there were many times that I was able to face the rest of my day and week only because of that service.

Thank you, Father Sam.

*Let us thank God whom we worship here in the beauty of holiness.*

*For your presence whenever two or three have gathered together in your name. Amen.*

—Mary Bellew, Warden Emeritus

## *The Village*

by R. S. Thomas

Anglican priest and poet (1913-2000)

Scarcely a street, too few houses  
To merit the title; just a way between  
The one tavern and the one shop  
That leads nowhere and fails at the top  
Of the short hill, eaten away  
By long erosion of the green tide  
Of grass creeping perpetually nearer  
This last outpost of time past.

So little happens; the black dog  
Cracking his fleas in the hot sun  
Is history. Yet the girl who crosses  
From door to door moves to a scale  
Beyond the bland day's two dimensions.

Stay, then, village, for round you spins  
On a slow axis a world as vast  
And meaningful as any posed  
By great Plato's solitary mind.



## ***Problems are not age specific***

No one is left untouched by problems that can come unexpectedly and change your life. Stephen Ministry's goal is to be there in times of crisis to bring Christ's healing love. As a mom of two sons and a stepmom of two daughters, I know that young adults face just as many major problems as senior citizens. From watching my children, I know that each one of them could have benefited from the help of a Stephen Minister. The problems of youth are no different than ones their elders face—grief, illness, losing or retiring from a job, rearing children, divorce or separation, and or feeling alone. There is no limit on the types of problems or the age that they might occur.

Just as problems are not age-specific, our Stephen Ministry needs Ministers of every age. Men, women, young, old: if you feel you would like to be involved with such a ministry, contact me or Mary Bellew.  
—Anita High

## ***Tribute to Wayne Eric Kukenberger***

*on the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his birth  
by Elizabeth Kukenberger, his mother*

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, Wayne Eric Kukenberger would have been forty years old. He wanted to be a fine carpenter and was pursuing that goal when he was killed in an automobile accident on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1995.

Wayne loved working with wood with Jim Dean, who said of him, "He enjoyed carpentry work and woodworking very much. He was an extremely pleasant fellow, and everybody around who came in contact with him, liked him. When we were on jobs, people would actually come up to me and tell me that the fellow who was working with me was a very pleasant guy. He was very dependable, very honest." Dean said, "When something needed to be done, Wayne would do it. He was always here before I was, and he was always working." At a young age, Wayne had the ability to work with wood; he made crosses and then coffee tables, and a big hope chest that we cherish.

Wayne was also a faithful acolyte, always willing to fill in for others as needed. He was a faithful Sunday School member, never missing a Sunday in fourteen years of attendance. Father French always asked Wayne to be acolyte on special occasions.

The poem below was written by Wayne when he was a little boy of 10 or 11, and it seems a tribute to his memory that the ideas in it are so prescient.

### ***The Farmer***

The farmer works day and night;  
He still won't win the fight.  
I still see some in Cooperstown,  
But eventually they will all go down.  
They took away our land and pride;  
Some of us farmers even died.  
You say you have good reasons;  
I don't see many crops this season.  
This could be the farmer's year of destruction—

Once we're gone, you'll see why you need our function.  
If nothing is done by the time the sun goes down,  
All us farmers will soon be gone.

Being a farmer was my desire,  
But how can I - my dreams went up in fire.  
In the future with all the high prices you'll have to pay,  
Maybe you will bring us farmers back some day.  
We used to produce the food to feed your face;  
How could you put us through this disgrace?  
All you care about is taking, not giving.  
How do you expect us to make a living?  
Maybe if you had to do something like work,  
Maybe you would stop acting like a jerk.  
How do you expect to eat your meals  
If farmers can't work in the fields?  
When you buy food in the store,  
When it comes to farmers, you'll wish there were more.

Wayne is remembered with love by family and friends as a person who touched lives and lent a helping hand, no matter the age or status of those in need. Appropriately, he is also recalled through The Wayne E. Kukenberger Memorial Scholarship Fund, set up by his family with the help of the Cooperstown School District and Milford B.O.C.E.S.

*By a Carpenter mankind was made, and only by that Carpenter can mankind be remade.*  
—Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469-1536)

## JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Javier Pleitez  
Joan White  
Lillian Bachanas  
Rosemary Craig
- 3 Jaelyn Courter  
Scott Segit
- 4 Gary Kearns
  
- 5 Anita Born  
Hannah Schwarzahans  
Karin Svahn
- 6 Mary Parriott  
Dennis Tallman
- 7 Stephanie Thorn  
John Lohan  
Joan Badgley  
Richard Scurry
- 8 Mary Schwarzahans
- 9 Duncan Clark
- 10 Bob Schneider  
Kim Murphy
- 11 Peggy Hymers  
Kris Potrikus
- 12 Rich Brown
- 13 Fred Schwarzahans  
Beth Tomayo
- 14 Steven Ratliff  
Claire Smith
- 18 Susan Lin
- 19 Chuck Carrier
- 20 Dakota Thorne
- 21 Emily Snell  
Dolores Petersen
- 22 Emilie Rigby
- 23 Jessica Baldic  
Niki Baldic  
Dakota Chase  
Robert Johnson
- 24 Laura Hubbell  
Virginia Ofer
- 26 Tiffany Grover
- 27 Broc Gilbert  
Mariah Courter
- 29 Moppet Clark
- 30 Phil Holz  
Derek Ratliff  
JaneAnn Casey

## JUNE MEMORIAL FLOWERS

- 7 John K. Winslow  
Chester J. Winslow  
Florence E.M. Winslow
- 14 Katharine Machen Lloyd  
Charles Wait Lloyd
- 21 Elizabeth June Wyckoff  
Rev. Canon George F.  
French
- 28 Fae Malania

## JUNE CANDLE MEMORIALS

- 7 Robert Bero
- 14 OPEN
- 21 Edward T. Farmer  
Ida Cotton Feeck  
William Douglas Feeck
- 28 OPEN

## THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY

- Michael LeBron  
William Mason Sanford  
Eric Liston  
Will MacMillan  
Esmeralda LeBron  
Travis Buck  
Matthew Cummings  
Drew Jones  
Morgan Buckland  
Theodore Staubly  
Daniel Hodd  
Suzanne V. Demirel  
Gregory Eaton  
Will Rigby  
Scott Dunn

## EXCHANGE STUDENTS

- Jonathan Birch - Brazil  
Anna Snell - Peru

## LET US PRAY FOR

- Frances Randall  
\* Patricia Buckland  
Doris Blomquist  
Priscilla Thomassen  
Elna Dickison  
Matthew Pollock  
Carol Niedzialkowski  
Carol Brown  
Lisa  
Gertrude Worrall  
Don  
Sarah  
Betty Kukenberger  
George Murray  
\* Dorothy Chase  
Jim Atwell  
Catherine Black  
Joanne  
Joan Winhold  
Kathy Lloyd  
Colleen  
\* Richard Clark  
Joyce  
Tom  
Andrew  
\* Leia Bailey and her family  
\* Ilsa Dohner

## JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 Jeanne & John Clow  
Marcy & Bob Birch
- 10 Gail & John Freehafer
- 11 Ellen & John Sanford
- 14 Ashley & Shelby Cooper
- 16 Dorothy & Roger Smith
- 17 Ruth & Milo Stewart
- 19 IdaMae & Herman  
Bridger
- 24 Kathy & Rick Jagels
- 27 Melissa & Kevin Ho-  
chbrueckner
- 28 Ann & Ray Lamberson  
Mona & Bruce Harris
- 29 Vivienne & Peter Clark