



Parish Profile 2024

St. Christopher's Episcopal Church 625 Main Street Chatham, Massachusetts 02633



Saint Christopher's Church Parish Profile 2024

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The Mission of St. Christopher's Church

*To experience the love of Christ,
and to inspire compassion in the world.*



Discernment

In the fall of 2023, the Vestry called ten parishioners to serve on the Search Committee. Our diocesan consultant, the Vestry, and the Search Committee met to begin our discernment process. During this meeting, we sought the common characteristics that describe this parish. As our Search Committee continued bi-weekly meetings, we explored our understanding of who we are.

Our discernment grew through the Holy Cow CAT survey; interviews with staff, committee chairs, and parishioners; and storytelling forums. The committee updates the parish at monthly Sunday forums and through our mid-week email messages.

The CAT survey results indicate that this could be a transformational time for St. Christopher's. We hope to seek growth through faith-based ministries to our wider community. We recognize the need for expanded pastoral care services. We value preaching, teaching, and fellowship. We are challenged to grow in spirituality as we learn to express our faith.



We Are...

a parish whose spiritual life is centered on worship and music. We are grateful for the beauty of our church and appreciate the depth it gives our worship.

Most of us live in Chatham and in the surrounding towns of Orleans, Brewster, and Harwich. Some live here all year, some are here only for the summer months, some have deep family roots in the community, and some are newcomers. We are predominantly well-educated, white, and retired; we are energetic and bring with us past experiences from other churches.

"I have found a home here."

Our investment in technology has allowed seasonal and home-bound members to be involved year-round in worship, ministry, and leadership. Our in-person attendance in the summer is significantly larger than in the winter.

We enjoy one another's company and fellowship. We participate in committees and ministries. We enjoy learning and expanding our thinking. All this and more brings us together. We laugh easily and care deeply. Our strengths are adaptability and energy, though at times we can have difficulty moving from our heads to our hearts. We are grateful for all that we have, and we feel a responsibility to give back. We are committed to finding solutions to the environmental issues and homelessness challenges facing the Cape.





The Soul of St. Christopher's *Worship and Music*

Invitation to Communion

This is the table not of the Church but of our Lord.
 It is to be made ready for those who love Him, and those who want to love Him more.
 So, come, you who have much faith and you who wish you had more.
 You who have been here often and you who have not been for a long time.
 You who have tried to follow and you who believe you have failed.
 Come, it is not I who invites you but our Lord.
 And it is His will that He should meet you here.

- Iona Abbey Community



St. Christopher's celebrates two worship services each Sunday, a spoken Holy Eucharist at 8:00 a.m. in Sibley Chapel and a Choral Eucharist at 10:00 a.m. in the main sanctuary. Rite II is followed at both services, and the New Zealand prayer book frequently supplements prayer. We've recently resumed Healing Prayer on Sundays. On Tuesday mornings, a Morning Prayer with Bible Study is conducted by our Pastoral Associate and clergy. A well-attended Contemplative Service is conducted via Zoom on Wednesday mornings.

A Blue Christmas service for those suffering loss during the Christmas season has become meaningful to many. Choral Evensong and Celtic Services as well as Advent Lessons and Carols, Ash Wednesday, and Easter week services are offered. Ascension Day, All Souls, and All Saints Day provide other opportunities that contribute to our liturgy. Summer Ecumenical services held on the beach celebrate our seaside community. In 2023, services included ten baptisms, nine weddings, and eleven burials. We give thanks for our bridge priests John and Gail, our transition priest Libby, and we welcome our interim rector Meg.



“As Episcopalians, we find our center in worship. Music is the servant and sister of worship. The Spirit is at work when liturgy and music are thoughtfully prepared with one accord, and these unfold in worship on Sunday mornings.”

“I am a snowbird who has been in the choir every summer for about 25 years. I love the small town warmth of St. Christopher’s – I love to sing – I love the caring, professional way Maury guides the choir every Sunday.”

Our worship is enriched by many devoted church members in support of our clergy. Vergers, Lay Readers, and Ushers participate in all services. The Altar Guild has a long history and tradition here. Fresh bread baked by those in the Bread Ministry is part of the 10:00 a.m. service. The Flower Guild arranges flowers for Sunday services and delivers them to parishioners.

Music is an integral part of the worship experience at St. Christopher’s. Under the direction of our organist and choirmaster, Maury Castro, our dedicated choir members and newly installed Pieter J. Schiller Memorial Organ provide a rich experience of music in the Anglican tradition.

The Handbell Choir and various vocal and instrumental performances, often including guest soloists, are integrated with the choir and organ during our 10:00 a.m. service and other special services.



“The choir gives me a sense of belonging to a community, unlike anything else I do. It is sometimes called choir camaraderie.”



The Heart of St. Christopher's *Parish Life*

Parish life at St. Christopher's was interrupted by the pandemic. During that time without in-person worship, our rector with the staff, associate clergy, and parishioners rapidly updated technology to send daily then weekly messages, offer streaming services, facilitate online committee work, and provide pastoral care through Zoom to keep our parish strong. We stayed connected through the dedicated work of our priests, staff, vestry, and parishioners.

Since that time, in-person parish life has been revitalized. Fellowship after services, greeters at each service, and forums after services have all been re-established. Earth-Honoring Faith lectures and Chatham Food Pantry forums have also been renewed. Our annual Newcomer and Summer Residents Reception and a celebration honoring the founders of Goll Farm School brought parishioners together in fellowship.

Our annual Christmas pageant brought the joy of the season to us all. A pot luck Mediterranean supper was held before the foot washing Maundy Thursday service. An Easter egg hunt between services on Easter Sunday brought grandparents and their families into the church.



Our Newcomers Committee has a strong history of hospitality and is exploring new ways of welcoming newcomers and visitors to the church.

We are eager to bring people together with more opportunities to enjoy each other's company in the meaningfulness of our church life.

*“Welcoming newcomers
is a big part of who we are.”*

The Heart of St. Christopher's *Pastoral Care*



Pastoral care is an integral part of St. Christopher's. For many years, our former rector was a devoted shepherd who provided pastoral care for all of us. In 2021, Judith Felton, a social worker with clinical and teaching experience, was hired as Pastoral Associate. The pastoral care program provides:

- bereavement support groups and individual counseling open for all experiencing loss and grief,
- a Blue Christmas service open for all who may be living with loss during Christmas,
- parish volunteers who conduct worship and healing services at local rehabilitation and long-term care facilities, and
- more than 20 volunteers who serve as lay pastoral care visitors and lay eucharistic ministers.

*“Our strongest suit is
what we do for each other.”*

The Pastoral Associate and Clergy form a skilled team providing support for church and community members in times of crisis, illness, and death.

In addition, pastoral care is apparent in subtle and quiet ways. Meal trains, flower deliveries, in-home visits, phone calls, and Sunday morning “How are you doing?” inquiries happen frequently. These are the fabric of our community and hold us together in love and connection.

Recently, Judith announced she will retire in September 2024. The success of pastoral care at St. Christopher's is her legacy. It is our highest priority to ensure the continuation and growth of pastoral care.





The Hands of St. Christopher's *Outreach*

Outreach plays a significant role in the St. Christopher's ministries. The Outreach Fund Committee researches organizations and recommends grants to the Vestry. The Committee then distributes the funds and encourages volunteer participation with the organizations it supports.

Uncommon Thrift

Uncommon Thrift at St. Christopher's is located across the driveway from the church. In 2020, the shop was completely revitalized and now is run by more than forty volunteers, composed of both church and non-church members. A shopping destination for locals and tourists alike, its great success has enabled us to support the wider community.



Housing and Nutrition

In 2023, we focused on local needs in housing and nutrition. Our parishioners participated in the Homeless Prevention Council's *Walk for Home*, and donations raised by walkers were matched by the Outreach Fund. Habitat for Humanity received funds supporting its net zero energy initiatives for two houses built in Chatham this past year. The Community Development Partnership received a grant to aid their mission of supporting local small businesses and finding housing solutions for local workers. Two local restaurants were granted funds to provide winter meals for clients.



The Chatham Food Pantry

The Chatham Food Pantry, managed and staffed by volunteers, is housed at St. Christopher's. The Lower Cape Outreach Council provides support and assistance with administration. Currently, the pantry serves more than 60 families with 260 family members. Health and nutritional education are provided through a monthly meeting with a nurse and nutritionist.



Earth-Honoring Faith

Earth-Honoring Faith is a ministry inspired by former Rector Brian McGurk to raise awareness of the world-wide climate crisis and to bring a spiritual commitment to environmental issues. The church supports the use of environmentally safe products throughout the building. We have presented various panels and forums to parishioners and the wider community during recent years. This committee belongs to the Faith Communities Environmental Network, which is part of the Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative.



Together with Africans

St. Christopher's has a long-standing commitment to the Goll Farm School in Liberia. Through the Together with Africans Committee, many parishioners contribute to yearly student scholarships. Over the past 14 years, more than 800 scholarships have been given. The Outreach Fund Committee also supports this ministry.



The Gallery at St. Christopher's

St. Christopher's is blessed with a ministry of sacred art. A generous parishioner, artist, and expert in her field arranges the exhibits based on Bible stories. Occasionally, she exhibits her own work. Church members, guests, and visitors enjoy these changing exhibits. An Arts Committee offers opening receptions and gallery talks with each new exhibit. The church has purchased pieces from these exhibits, and they are displayed in our permanent collection throughout the building.



The Warming Center

In collaboration with the town of Chatham, a newly organized Warming Center in the parish hall will serve as a drop-in daytime shelter and charging station for the community during emergencies. A core group of 20 trained St. Christopher's volunteers will staff the center. Food will be provided through the Chatham Food Pantry and prepared in the church's kitchen.



Outreach at St. Christopher's has the potential for growth as more volunteers are seeking a deepening commitment to the work of the church's mission in our community.



History of St. Christopher's

St. Christopher's Church began in 1960 with a small gathering of four Episcopalians in a Chatham home. This new parish had support from The Reverend James L. Babcock and lay leaders of The Church of the Holy Spirit in Orleans. Worship initially took place in the American Legion Hall on School Street, then moved to the Unitarian Universalist Church at 625 Main Street, our current home. In 1962, members purchased the property for \$20,000. In 1967, St. Christopher's gained full parish status within the Diocese of Massachusetts. The Reverend W. Gilbert Dent was elected as the first Rector.



Sanctuary 1970s

In 1969, The Reverend Carl G. Carlozzi succeeded Reverend Dent. During his 11-year tenure, the church underwent extensive renovation and expansion. Adjacent property to the church was purchased, and with a significant bequest in 1970, a parish house was constructed. Further building included the Arthur H. Sibley Chapel and Sacristy, a new parish hall and kitchen, and a bell tower.



Sibley Chapel

In the 1970s, the church developed into a vibrant, community-minded parish. St. Christopher's volunteers were involved in the establishment of the Chatham Reassurance Program. With the Chatham Police, homebound and elderly were called each morning to confirm their well-being. St. Christopher's volunteers started a Chatham Employment Service. In 1975, the first St. Christopher's Thrift and Gift Shop opened.



Liturgical change was taking place in the Episcopal Church during the late 1970s, and the new 1979 Prayer Book was adopted nationally. The Reverend Carlozzi noted that St. Christopher's adopted the new prayer book "without fuss." Parishioners numbered 402, a Saturday 5:00 p.m. service was added to worship, and a class of 28 was confirmed by Bishop Coburn.

In 1982, the Reverend Whitney H. Burr was called to serve as Rector. Under his leadership, Sunday School classrooms were added, offices were air-conditioned, and a central aisle in the Sanctuary was added. In 1990, the Memorial Garden was installed. Fellowship and Outreach ministries were emphasized, and in 1982, the Chatham Food Pantry was established. In 1998, the Pastoral Care Task Force was initiated. The Reverend Burr retired in 2001.



The Reverend Brian W. McGurk was installed as the fourth Rector in 2003. Extensive renovations of St. Christopher's began immediately. This enormous project enjoyed deep and widespread parishioner support. After two successful capital campaigns, the project was dedicated in 2009.

Following the renovations, with Reverend McGurk's leadership and parishioner support, focus shifted to outreach and community ministries, additional worship on weekdays, increased spiritual formation, and adult education. In 2021, the entire back of the church was redesigned to accommodate our new Dobson Pipe Organ.



Chatham *and Surrounding Communities*

Chatham, known as “the elbow” in Barnstable County, is located at the most southeastern point in the Commonwealth. Its spectacular coastline and small-town quality have attracted generations of summer residents. The annual summer population grows to 35,000. The year-round population of approximately 6,600 residents includes retirees of considerable wealth, working families, people living near or at the poverty level, and some who may be temporarily homeless.

On the Lower Cape, there are three Episcopal churches: St. Christopher’s, Chatham; The Church of the Holy Spirit, Orleans; and Christ Church, Harwich Port. There are six other churches in Chatham: First Congregational Church, First United Methodist Church, Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, Redemption Rock of Cape Cod, South Chatham Community Church, and Unitarian Universalist Meeting House.

Students attend Monomoy Regional School District, which includes the Chatham and Harwich Elementary Schools, Monomoy Regional Middle School, and Monomoy Regional High School. Local students may attend Nauset Regional High School, Cape Cod Regional Technical High School, and other school districts offering school choice. The Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School serves students in grades 6, 7, and 8; admission is by lottery. The Cape also offers educational opportunities at Cape Cod Community College with multiple locations in southeastern Massachusetts.

Chatham offers an abundance of recreational activities including sailing, beautiful beaches, freshwater ponds, lakes and rivers, nature hikes, bike trails, racquet sports, and golf. The Eldredge Public Library, the Orpheum Theater, the Community Center, Chatham Center for Active Living, and the Cape Cod Symphony contribute to our plentiful options for the arts. In July and August, popular attractions include the Chatham Anglers, a member of the prestigious Cape Cod Baseball College League, performances by Cape Harmony and Hyannis Sound, weekly band concerts, Ecumenical beach services, the Cape Cod Music Festival, and the Cape Cod Shakespeare Festival.



Health care is available at Cape Cod Hospital in Hyannis as well as Fontaine Urgent Care Center in Harwich, Oppenheim Center in Chatham, and a seasonal Urgent Care Clinic in Orleans.

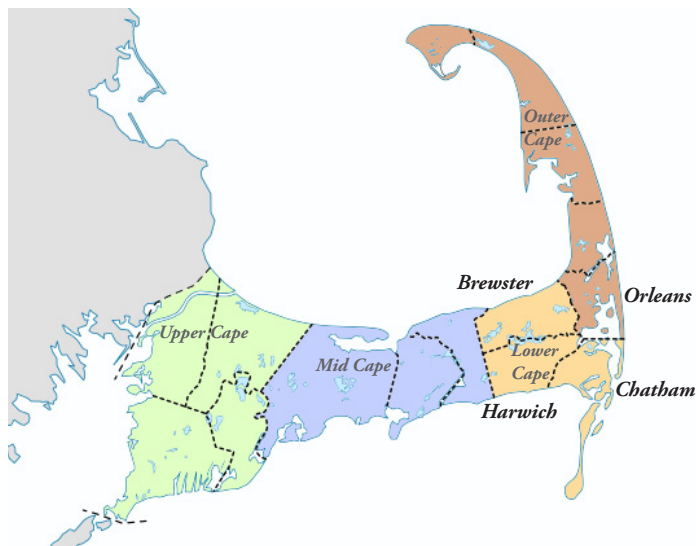
St. Christopher's is actively committed to addressing the current issues facing Chatham and the wider Cape community. These include the lack of affordable housing for workers, the inability to attract younger workers and families, food insecurity, homelessness, the impact of climate warming on our fishing fleet (the third largest in Massachusetts), beach erosion, rising sea levels, and the need to support our senior population.

Surrounding Towns

St. Christopher's parishioners come from Chatham and the surrounding towns of Brewster, Harwich, and Orleans. These constitute the Lower and Outer Cape communities.



Brewster: Brewster sits on the Cape Cod Bay side of the Lower Cape. Rich farmland and the community commitment to the environment are the hallmarks of Brewster. It has a year-round population of 10,323, and the economy is dominated by healthcare/social assistance and hospitality services. Nickerson State Park lies within Brewster.



Harwich: Lying west of Chatham, seven villages constitute the town of Harwich. Harwich is larger than its neighbors with a population of 13,438, and its economy is dominated by retail sales. Art galleries, shops and restaurants, and the harbor on Nantucket Sound give the villages of Harwich their distinct qualities.

Orleans: Orleans jogs north into the forearm of the elbow of the Cape. It is the year-round commercial hub of the Outer Cape at the junction of Routes 6, 6A, and 28. It has a population of 6,307. It lies between Nauset Beach on the Atlantic and Skaket Beach on Cape Cod Bay.



Our Church Home

Building

With deep and widespread parishioner support of time, talent, and financial resources, extensive renovations of St. Christopher's were carried out between 2004 and 2009. The altar was moved, increasing the sanctuary size and creating space for the new organ. Additionally, space was added for new and larger offices, a library, choir practice, and Sunday School classrooms. Air conditioning, a sprinkler system, and a fully accessible elevator also were updated and added to the building. Behind the altar, an iconic stained-glass window was designed and installed by Lyn Hovey.

Today, one enters St. Christopher's by a stone walkway under a colonnade and into an atrium where a display of sacred art welcomes all. On this floor is the Sibley Chapel, a family reception room, the parish hall, and a full kitchen. The Sanctuary, up a short flight of stairs from the atrium, accommodates up to 300 people. The baptismal font is now in a quiet alcove in the sanctuary.



Administrative offices, the library, and the pastoral care office are located on the lower level of this building. This level also can be entered from the main town-owned parking lot behind the church. The former daycare and classroom area is now being used by the Uncommon Thrift shop for storage. The Chatham Food Pantry's main entrance is accessible from the lower level and the parking lot. Under the professional and skillful care of our Facilities Manager, Ali Crockett, our building is well maintained.



Grounds

St. Christopher’s is set in landscaped grounds with a wide shallow lawn fronting Main Street and a spacious lawn and garden area in the back. Here a serene Memorial Garden offers a contemplative space amidst a bustling tourist town.

In the future, we hope to use our building and grounds for increased social, supportive, and educational activities for the larger Lower Cape community. We recognize that to use our spaces well, they must be maintained to a high standard which demands good planning and financial stewardship.



“Every place I looked in the church revealed architectural and artistic details that surround us with beauty when we worship.”



Financial Profile

St. Christopher's is committed to maintaining a strong and stable financial position. Careful shepherding of our resources and the diligence of Bridgette Renaud, our Parish Administrator, enables us to:

- Support and staff all the worship and educational programming of our parish
- Maintain our beautiful buildings and grounds
- Fulfill our obligation to the Diocese
- Generously contribute to and participate in local and global outreach projects

The pandemic had a significant impact on our pledge and plate donations for the last several years. As we finished 2023, that income source was back to pre-pandemic levels. Our endowment and investment portfolio, now at \$3.8 million, has been another important element to help us cover our operating expenses. In 2023, the Stewardship Campaign surpassed its goal of \$530,000. The Cloister Society actively works to continue building our endowment.

Year	Pledging Units	Dollars Pledged
2020	194	\$547,038
2021	186	\$580,934
2022	179	\$565,627
2023	183	\$583,494



“Passing our faith to future generations... supporting St. Christopher's through planned giving.”



Outreach efforts are largely funded through dedicated donations from generous parishioners and from the significant income we derive from Uncommon Thrift. We are always looking to manage our costs in ways that are consistent with our values. In 2020 and 2021, we installed 121 solar panels on our roof; these panels now fully offset the energy consumption of the church.

During 2023, the total of our outreach efforts is conservatively estimated to have exceeded \$150,000. This includes both direct, facilitated payments, and in-kind donations of money, space, and manpower. Highlights include:

- Housing, staffing, and equipping the Chatham Food Pantry.
- Providing ongoing support for Goll Farm in Liberia.
- Making grants to local not-for-profit groups to address housing and food insecurity issues.
- Offering the local community a broad range of free pastoral care programs.
- Providing free meeting space for AA, Parkinson's support group, and others.
- Hosting community music groups and concerts.
- Housing and equipping an emergency Warming Center for the community.
- Supporting the Episcopal Relief and Development's efforts abroad.

Parish Financial Summary – Year End

Parish Financial Summary--Year End				
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Operating Income ⁽¹⁾	\$ 775,408	\$ 674,383	\$ 687,126	\$ 742,738
Operating Expense				
Clergy	\$ 187,419	\$ 195,813	\$ 211,806	\$ 236,998
Building and Grounds	\$ 93,379	\$ 81,675	\$ 100,206	\$ 102,513
Administration	\$ 130,265	\$ 111,489	\$ 114,682	\$ 135,827
Music	\$ 106,762	\$ 108,831	\$ 112,323	\$ 121,942
Diocesan Assessment	\$ 88,068	\$ 90,880	\$ 90,636	\$ 82,800
Other	\$ 34,199	\$ 34,027	\$ 39,350	\$ 40,574
Total Operating Expense	\$ 640,092	\$ 622,715	\$ 669,003	\$ 720,654
Net Surplus	\$ 135,116	\$ 51,668	\$ 17,773	\$ 22,084
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 4,835,599	\$ 5,395,300	\$ 5,810,400	\$ 6,233,900
Endowment	\$ 2,280,524	\$ 2,688,873	\$ 2,411,345	\$ 3,790,097
Total Assets	\$ 7,980,733	\$ 9,029,266	\$ 9,043,019	\$ 11,243,900
Estimated Outreach Support ⁽²⁾	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000

(1) Operating income in 2020 includes a one-time forgivable loan of approximately \$78,000 under the CARES Act which was used for operating expenses of the church.

(2) Represents estimated annual support for Outreach not captured in the above expenses.

Source: Annual Report as reported



We Hope

To broaden and deepen our spiritual education.

To develop a strategic plan for the future of St. Christopher's.

To ensure the continuation and growth of our Pastoral Care Program.

To provide a path to include newcomers, youth, and young families in our church life.

To increase stewardship participation and continue to build our endowment.

To expand our environmental efforts in our community.

To encourage involvement in hands-on projects beyond our parish.



We Seek

A Rector Who...

Will preach sermons that teach us the relevance of the Gospel.

Will share our commitment to a welcoming tradition of hospitality.

Will help us grow in our knowledge of the love of Christ through education, ministries, and service.

Will value pastoral care, embrace the needs of our parishioners, share our sorrows, and celebrate our joys.

Will guide us in creative ways to reach children, youth, and families in our parish and our community.

Will develop transformational ways to utilize our physical resources for the benefit of our community.

Will work with us to support and encourage stewardship participation.

Will be a collaborative leader and role model to our staff.

Will be a partner with the qualities of warmth, humor, kindness, and empathy.



In summary, we seek a rector whose faith is grounded in a personal relationship with Christ. A preacher and teacher who will deepen our faith. A partner in our work at St. Christopher's who values and will build upon the ministry of this parish. We are ready for this transition and look forward to welcoming our new rector.



The Reverend Margaret Eileen Fowler Ingalls, BA, MA, M.Div., Interim Rector
The Reverend John Martiner, D.Min., Clergy Associate
The Reverend Gail S. Smith, Clergy Associate

STAFF

Maury A. Castro *Organist & Choirmaster, Director of Communications*
Bridgette Renaud *Parish Administrator, Assistant Treasurer*
Judith Felton *Pastoral Associate*
Ali Crockett *Facilities Manager*

VESTRY OFFICERS

Ann Ward *Senior Warden*
Noah Fleischmann *Junior Warden*
David Smith *Warden-Elect*
Scott Goodwin *Treasurer*
Lynn Van Dine *Clerk*

VESTRY MEMBERS

Sandra Arnold Mike Foughty
Tamara Bazzle Mary Gulrich
John Bendas Pam Hufnagel
Leslie Collins Claire Olgren

SEARCH COMMITTEE

Win McCausland *Chair*
Debby Saliba *Vice-Chair*
Heidi Quill *Secretary*
Jeff Arnold *Chaplain*
Mary Bast Andy Fay
John Bendas Martha Higgins
Suzanne Boas Sue Sargent

Please submit letter of application, resume, sermon links, and OTM form to
Edwin McCausland at
strectorsearch@icloud.com
Deadline for applying is August 30, 2024



The history, the salt air and sea, and the embracing community spirit all contribute to the unique character of Chatham.



St. Christopher's Episcopal Church
625 Main Street, Chatham, Massachusetts 02633
(508) 945-2832

stchristopherschatham.org