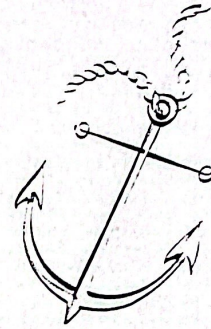


Celebrating the Past

Stories and Remembrances

of

COA Members



A request was made to many people who have been members of Christ Our Anchor from the earliest days. Responses were received from several members who shared varied heart-felt remembrances, information, and thoughts. Their stories are real blessings to us as our congregation makes this current transition and as we are in search for a new pastor. Thank you to Hal Boyd, Roy Field, Helen and Richard Kelley, John and Mary Gail Kokish, Pat Latham, Ann and Adam Leipold, Marilyn and Tom Rorick, and Doris Whitney. You have helped in this effort to tell our story! The stories of involvement and commitment to our church home by many people over the many years are a grand story.

Roy Field participated as a member on the Administrative Commission established by the Presbytery in 1979 for the College Parkway New Church Development effort. This commission included area Presbyterian ministers and Pastor Rob McClure was the organizing minister. At the October 6, 1980, meeting the motion was passed with all in favor to name the new church Christ Our Anchor. Christ Our Anchor was formally established in 1982 with the first meetings in the Broadneck Elementary School on Shore Acres Road and with progressive dinners at various of the early churchgoers' homes.

Hal and Mary Jane Boyd became part of the congregation in 1983, attending services in the elementary school. In the mid 1980s John Urlock led the building fund financial drive and the building committee was headed by Chuck Stevenson. There was a memorable building fund dinner held at St. Margaret's Episcopal Church – a continuing strength is that Christ Our Anchor cooperates with other churches in our area. Pastor Rob McClure was the founding Pastor and his wife Farel McClure gave wonderful encouragement in planning for Anchors-A-Wee Preschool. Helen Kelley remembers the champion of the preschool was Ann Brown. The main benefit of the preschool was attraction of young families with small children since many of these families became members of COA.

Hal points out that these were difficult times. There were many challenges of space, personnel, and finances -- short of members and short of funds. Yet there were some real "giants" who came forward within our congregation to lead by their example in overcoming these challenges. Some of these leaders include Mike Armstrong, John Kokish, Marilyn Rorick, and Chuck Rowell. Our earliest treasurer was Marilyn Rorick, who each month decided which bills needed to be paid. Marilyn Rorick says, "we have had our share of struggles, but we have survived and are perhaps stronger for it."

Rob McClure had a serious heart attack in 1982. From then on, Chuck Rowell, who was Clerk of Session, virtually ran the church. A ceremonial groundbreaking for our new church occurred in June 1986, just before Pastor McClure left for his new assignment with the Synod of the Northwest and Alaska. That summer Mary Jane Boyd chaired the Pastor Search Committee and then Pastor Nominating Committee. Pastor Corinne Baker was called to be our Interim Pastor. With the arrival of Pastor Corinne began the real ground-breaking on our new church. Pastor Corinne visited the construction site so frequently that the construction crew presented her with her own hard hat!

Adam and Ann Leipold also became part of this congregation in 1983 and were pleased that this was a smaller church providing opportunity to know most of the members. They felt that folks were extremely warm and welcoming, especially Mary Jane Boyd, who over the years was outstanding in greeting newcomers; and Pastor Rob McClure gave good sermons.

Ann Leipold also served on the Pastor Nominating committee. When Pastor Corinne came on board she experimented with some new worship experiences, some of which worked well. "One time we marched around the sanctuary carrying banners"; Ann says this did not go over so well, but was a subsequent source of humor. Ann says that it was a proud day in November 1987 when the first church service was held in our new building; Pastor Corinne observed that there was 100% attendance.

There is a framed document in the narthex with signatures of those who attended that day and there is also a videotape of this event.

Pat Latham provided information about the paraments, the ornamental ecclesiastical hangings or vestments. There are many contributions by loving hands in our congregation which help to evoke the presence of God in our church. Looking through the list is a history story all by itself. Starting with when our congregation met under Pastor McClure, this is the list of people who have shared their artistic and sewing skills: Bev Turner, Farel McClure, Pastor Rob McClure, Kathryn Miguez, Doris Whitney, Diana Martin, Peg Lloyd, Julie Reed, Pat Latham, Toni Richardson, Marilyn Rorick, Susan Wright, Judy McKinney, and Pat Latham's mother Sally Latham. Three of our numerous paraments were gifts given as memorials. Pat has shared an amazing story about the "tapestry" of love and beauty created in our church community to share our love of God!

Farel and Pastor Rob McClure started out their ministry with us with the creation of several of our paraments, one of which is the burlap banner for nails with a cross that says "Lord Have Mercy". The cross used in the narthex was made by Ron Quigley. Hal Boyd built the rack in the storage room for the paraments and asked Louie McKinney to help him.

John and Mary Gail Kokish tell of how our church has been part of the greater Broadneck community since we moved into our new building in November 1987. Prior to this John and Mary Gail were with the early congregants who worshiped in the Broadneck Elementary School starting in 1980.

In 1990 Pastor Don Lincoln was called as our full time pastor. Ann Leipold tells of the starting of the second service – the contemporary service. Ann was on the committee with Judy Colgan and Jen Urlock, who chaired, to research other churches' experiences. Under Pastor Don the second service was initiated. Pastor Don played guitar, and Jeanne and Paul Harrison were active with Pastor Don in this service.

In the search for a new Pastor following the departure of Pastor Don the congregation determined that a focus on mission including through mission trips was of great importance. Celebration of our 20th anniversary coincided with installation of Pastor Steve Tisinger. In the years with Pastor Steve there were annual trips to Guatemala. Ann Leipold tells of her joy in participating in one of these mission trips. Since Hurricane Katrina there have been annual trips to the Gulf Coast until this past year when a mission trip went to the Jersey Shore to give aid following Hurricane Sandy. The next such mission trip is scheduled again for the Gulf Coast. Youth mission trips have been to Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia and western Maryland.

Roy Field has "fond memories" of the beginning of COA. He says that the members of COA "are my dear friends and I enjoy being with you very much. My life with our Savior is better with you folks." Roy takes part in the adult Bible study on Sunday and the prayer meeting once a month. Roy is thankful to God for each of our pastors and

thankful to each in our congregation who have a role in our church's services or contribute in special church groups.

Among the many thoughts shared by Hal Boyd, he says that our congregation has resiliency and he feels that the congregation is continuing to cultivate new leaders. Some of the points in time that he thinks were remarkable were the initiation of Life Style Stewardship by Mary Jane Boyd from their experience in a previous church home in Alabama. The Adult Choir under Diana Martin and the Children's Choir started under Nancy Jerome are major calling cards for the community – when the children sing, the parents attend. The Adult Sunday School was started by Chuck Rowell, and is wonderfully being continued now by Marilyn Rorick. John Kokish's talks at mission time are hard to beat as he lights us all up. The mission trips, including those to the Gulf Coast and to Guatemala and the mission trips for the kids are so important. At various times, small group gatherings have been pursued with great success – Pastor Corinne hosted a Super Bowl party – these events help to encourage the personal commitment of our members, out of which it is easier to draw out the financial help our church home needs. New church training sessions are so important, as many of our members come from a variety of religious backgrounds; it is most important to focus on training of the Elders. Hal used to post new member biographies and photos either on a bulletin board or in the Anchorline Newsletter and he hopes that this will be continued.

Marilyn Rorick has always felt that COA is a family friendly church, with a good mix of people from infants to over 90 years in age. She feels that the congregants truly care about all of the other members of the church. When asked, Marilyn told of some of the humorous moments of when her children were little growing up in this church family – ask her about these, possibly there are similar moments in the other families that grew up in this church home. Marilyn points out that for a church our size we have incredible music; our preschool has been an important outreach to the community for over 25 years; and we have long worked with other religious organizations in the larger Broadneck community on service projects in our area.

John and Mary Gail Kokish are proud of our mere presence on the Broadneck Peninsula. Our church community has a strong sense of purpose and resiliency. John and Mary Gail very much admire the strength and character of the members and friends of the church over these years, together with the willingness of our lay leaders to serve in all facets of church life. Events and efforts that have made John and Mary Gail pleased to be part of our church home include: the acting out of the Last Supper as portrayed by men of the church; participation in our worship service by the black gospel choir; the Cantata performed during the Christmas season; services conducted by the youth of the church; Vacation Bible School; COA participation in Gift/Food Giving Program for needy families during the Christmas season; participation in My Brother's Pantry, especially when it is our turn to box and distribute the food; participation in providing meal for the Lighthouse Shelter in Annapolis.

COA History Continued

Ann Leipold says we are still a smaller church with some wonderful small group ministries so that even more people can become involved and get to know each other better. Ann feels it is notable how incredibly successful has been the Anchors-A Wee program and that COA has both a traditional and a contemporary worship service. Ann is a Stephen Minister and is happy that we have a Stephen Ministry program as part of COA.

Doris and Linwood Whitney were part of these early days and sometimes Doris still comes and joins the choir. She says the music program has always been good. For many years Doris and Lin helped with My Brothers Pantry and both appreciated that experience. Lin was on the planning team for design of the addition to the church; he was the overall maintenance and electrical fix-it man for so many years. Lin monitored the building of the new wing and after his surprising early death as the victim of a car accident the new wing was dedicated in his name. Pastor Don Lincoln officiated the 4/30/1998 funeral for Lin and the recollection is that there was not a dry eye, including Pastor Don's.

Helen and Richard Kelley recall how Hal and Mary Jane Boyd kept talking about creating a memorial garden and how much COA needed such a place. Many of the younger folks thought, this is way down in the priority list!. The Boyds' pushed (that is who the Kelleys remember for keeping this issue in the mix!). The county held the idea up also, confusion over the idea of "cemetery" and the memorial garden was years in the making. The first proposal was in 1993 and the start of the garden was in 2003 with completion in 2004. The last part was to put the stone in upon which the name plaques would be mounted. Mary Jane pushed for this completion because she really thought there would be a need. Soon there was; "our grandson, Liam Kelley, was the first whose ashes are in the Memorial Garden. Since then several others' ashes are in the garden too, including "younger" folks. The entire Kelley/Muller/Kemerer/Egan family is very appreciative of the persistence that got the Memorial Garden completed."

Helen and Richard Kelley are proud of how our church has lasted for a longtime, "we may be small but we live big." Helen points out, we've had a legacy of strong, hard-working Christians, people such as Ann Brown, Chuck Rowell, Lin Whitney, Mary Jane Boyd, Peg Lloyd, Bev Turner, the Quigleys who are all now gone, but we also have many who are still here and some still going strong." As Helen points out, her children including Matt Kelley and his wife Katie grew up in COA and now their children too are making a difference in the COA family. "Each person can make a difference."

A further description of Hal Boyd's emphasis on Life Style Stewardship is appropriate. In short this stewardship means "time, talent, money, and reconciliation -given with a forgiving heart." In 2 Samuel 24:24 King David declares "I will not offer to God that which costs me nothing." The value of the gift presented to God is determined by its value to the giver. In Life Style Stewardship we are asked to strengthen our relationship with God through our personal sacrifice; we are asked to rededicate our lives so that our sacrifice reflects our level of commitment to the growth of God's kingdom; and it is important to remember that although we may differ in our ability to give financially, our willingness to do our part should be the same.

Prepared by Alice Robeson, Elder