

1735 TIMES

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**Historic
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& MUSEUM**

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RELIGIOUS LIBERTY & THE FIRST AMENDMENT

An Evening with Clay Jenkinson and Lindsay Chervinsky

May 8, 2025

It may be hard to follow up her outstanding presentation last September on John Adams, but that very well may be the case next spring when presidential historian Lindsay Chervinsky returns to Historic Christ Church. This time, Chervinsky will have a special guest with her: Clay Jenkinson.

One of America's foremost humanities scholars, Jenkinson is a writer, filmmaker, historical reenactor and virtuoso moderator. Many know Jenkinson from his portrayal of the nation's third president on *The Thomas Jefferson Hour*, a weekly public radio program that ran for three decades. In May 2023, Jenkinson launched *Listening to America*. Described as "part Kerouac, part Charles Kuralt (without the schmaltz), part Steinbeck, all with a serious humanities perspective," *Listening to America* seeks to

travel the country's "less visited byways" to hear the "many voices of America's past, present, and future." As with *The Thomas Jefferson Hour*, Chervinsky has been a regular guest on *Listening to America*.



Clay Jenkinson

On Thursday, May 8, Jenkinson and Chervinsky will join forces at Historic Christ Church for a special program on one of the enduring themes in the American experience: the struggle for religious liberty and its enshrinement in the First Amendment. The setting may seem ironic. When completed in 1735, Christ Church stood as the antithesis of religious liberty. Its triple-deck pulpit, seating arrangements and massive scale and refinement represented an idealized vision of the Church of England's authority and traditional role in Virginia. Yet it was here and at churches, courthouses, and public and private spaces across the colony that Virginians' landmark struggle for religious freedom took shape.

For Jenkinson, religious liberty is "Jefferson's greatest hit." Jenkinson insists that in the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom Jefferson was right to argue that "liberty of conscience, liberty to think what we think, write what we want to write, say what we want to say, is the key to all other liberties." Indeed, Jefferson believed the constitutional freedom of religion to be "the most inalienable and sacred of all human rights."

Stay tuned for more information on the program, but mark your calendars for May 8, 2025, as Historic Christ Church welcomes these two nationally acclaimed historians to the stage.

Save the Date

Saturday, April 5 - 4:00 p.m.

"Textures of the Baroque"

The Wren Masters return to Historic Christ Church on Saturday, April 5, with "Textures of the Baroque." Featuring the music of Buxtehude, Schmelzer, J.S. Bach, Jean-Philippe Rameau and others, and showcasing Opus 93, HCC's new continuo organ, this exciting program explores the contrasting keyboard sounds of both organ and harpsichord with the baroque violin and viola da gamba.



The Wren Masters specialize in the historical performance of 17th & 18th century music on period instruments: baroque violin, viola da gamba and harpsichord. Originally formed in 2005, the Wrens are named after their favorite performance space, William & Mary's Christopher Wren Chapel, circa 1695. The group also has an affinity for Christ Church, calling it the "quintessential performance space for baroque music" and a place where both instrument and music "instantly feel at home."

Semiquincentennial Programs Highlight 2025-2026

The 2024 Summer Speaker Series "The First Three: From Washington to Jefferson" launched Historic Christ Church & Museum's multi-year effort to commemorate the 250th anniversary of American Independence, known as the semiquincentennial. Here are some of the special programs coming to HCC&M over 2025 and 2026:

2025 Spring Speaker Series

April 10 – Mark Maloy
Battles of Lexington and Concord

May 8 – Clay Jenkinson and Lindsay Chervinsky
Religious Liberty and the First Amendment

June 12 – Jon Kukla
Patrick Henry's "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death"

2025 Summer Parish Crawl

June TBD – Scotchtown; Historic Polegreen Church; St. John's, Richmond
Reenactment of Patrick Henry's "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death"

2025 Rappahannock Institute for Lifelong Learning

June 4, 11 & 18 – Robert Teagle
Virginia in 1775

2026 Traveling Exhibition from VA250 Commission

June 22 – August 3
Give Me Liberty: Virginia & The Forging of a Nation

View the 2024 Summer Speaker Series
at HCC&M's Vimeo Site:

<https://vimeo.com/user230147820>



Dr. Lindsay Chervinsky joins volunteers Marilyn Loomis (left) and Laurie Goddin (right) before her talk on John Adams on September 19 wrapped up HCC&M's 2024 Summer Speaker Series. The series was made possible in part by grants from the J. Edwin Treakle Foundation and from VA250 Commission in partnership with Virginia Humanities. Loomis and Goddin both worked at Mount Vernon, where Chervinsky was recently named Executive Director of the George Washington Presidential Library.

2 OPUS 93

3 Conservation:
Corotoman Ceramics

4 Wax Museum
Debuts



2025
Visitor Season Begins
April 1

Volunteer Spring Training
April 8, 9, 10

Volunteer Spring Celebration
April 24

Opus 93

On Sunday, September 29, Historic Christ Church dedicated Opus 93, a new continuo organ handcrafted by Taylor & Boody Organbuilders of Staunton, Virginia. A gift from Miriam MacCarthy in memory of her mother and brother, Opus 93 was constructed of materials following designs known in Europe for well over 500 years. Builder George Taylor, who visited the church in the 1950s when his father served as pastor of a church in Weems, relished the opportunity to build an organ for Christ Church. "Over the years I have often dreamt of having the chance to work in a colonial church," said Taylor. "Christ Church, with its rare, reverberant acoustics and exquisite architecture, is arguably the finest of such buildings in the state."

Christ Church never had an organ during the colonial period, but Taylor says that if an English organ had been brought to the church in its early days, it would have been a small chamber instrument similar to those known in Williamsburg to Robert Carter. Today, such an instrument is known as a continuo organ and is prized for its versatility in accompanying vocal and instrumental ensembles.



This view captures Kelley Blanton, a cabinet maker who learned his trade in historical joinery in Colonial Williamsburg, planing oak pipes in one of the early stages of construction.



BJ Regi, a whiz of a pipemaker and wife of Erik Boody, president of the company, presses in the mouths of the organ's Nasat stop. Note her completed ones on the right.

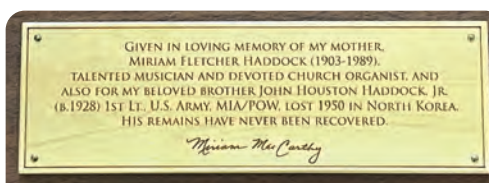
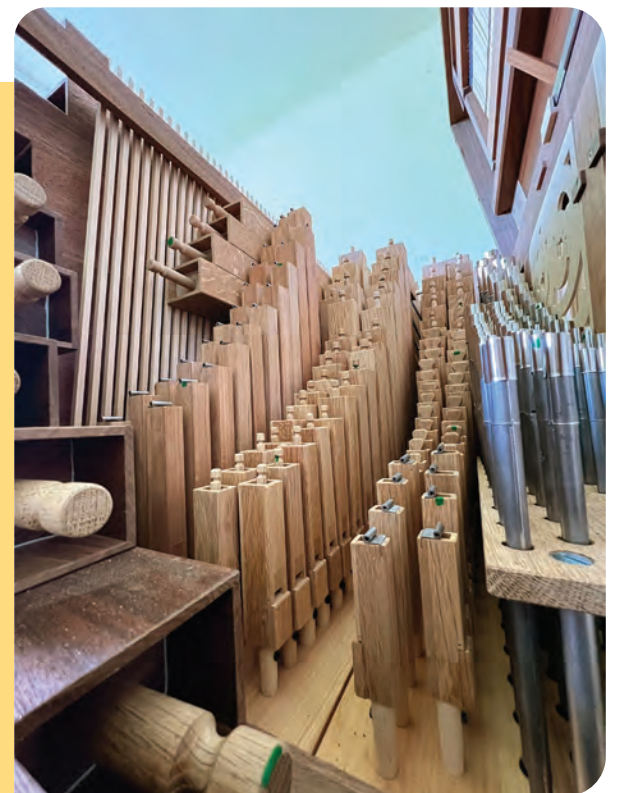


Joel VanderZee, a talented organbuilder and gifted organist from Chicago, cuts open the valve slots under the windchest.



Carvings by Robbie Lawson, who serves as pipe maker, case designer, sculptor and vice president of Taylor & Boody. Note the bird, butterfly and leaves in his carvings.

An interior view taken from below on the treble end with organ lid propped up on the right. Most of the wood pipes are tuned by the adjustable stopper handles, but some have metal tuning rolls. The metal pipes on the right have adjustable tuning slides so the organ can be tuned in various temperaments. The green dots identify pipes that play a "c".



Dedication plaque installed on organ case

From left, organbuilder Joel Vanderzee; organist Giles Cooke, who performed at the dedication recital on September 29; Miriam "Mimsy" MacCarthy, whose generosity funded the organ; George Taylor, recently retired head of Taylor & Boody Organbuilders; and craftsman Sean Dye.

Organ after installation in the Chase pew



Meet Jill Sears, Development Director

Jill has southern roots in North Carolina but grew up in a small town in Monmouth County, New Jersey. A graduate of East Carolina University, she earned a BS degree in business with a concentration in marketing and a minor in Spanish. She is a member of Campbell Memorial Presbyterian Church and the Rotary Club of the NNK.

Married with three children, Jill and her husband, Mike Sears, started visiting the Northern Neck more than 20 years ago. In 2020 they purchased Mike's mother's home on Indian Creek and moved to Kilmarnock from Phoenix, AZ, and became official "come heres".



Mike and Jill have three children: Emily (26), Audrey (24), and Will (19). The girls are living and working locally, and Will is finishing his second year at Arizona State University.

Most recently, Jill comes to Historic Christ Church via The Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Neck and Bay Aging. She brings more than 15 years of non-profit experience with successful roles as a director of programs, development and marketing, and community engagement.

For fun and relaxation Jill enjoys spending time with her family, reading, and pickleball. She and Mike also enjoy an occasional round of golf at ICYCC – that is fun but rarely relaxing – according to Jill.

When asked what brought Jill to FHCC, she said, "I love working with people in my community for a cause that is bigger than myself. I look forward to contributing and helping to bring support for the rich and deep history here at Christ Church. I cannot wait to meet all the volunteers and learn why FHCC is special to you."

Wax Museum Debuts

Martha Washington and Molly Pitcher, Paul Revere and John Mercer Langston, Benjamin Franklin and Betty Landon Carter: these were some of the figures who came alive this May at the first ever wax museum at Historic Christ Church. Portrayed by local third and fourth graders, the figures stood silent until approached by a visitor, when each sprang to life to share tales about their famous character. Over a hundred family members and guests enjoyed meeting these people from the past as the children's voices filled the church and museum with inspiring stories from the American experience. HCC&M volunteers Kathie Galgano and Della Kidd created the wax museum and worked with teacher Noel Ross from Chesapeake Academy to help the kids with costumes and character research.



August Goodrich and Mariah Veney as Robert King Carter and Betty Landon Carter



Jackson Price and Aria Russell as George and Martha Washington



Liam Veney as Paul Revere



Tillie Rowe as Sir Walter Raleigh



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**Foundation for
Historic Christ Church, Inc.**

PO Box 24 · Irvington, Virginia 22480
804-438-6855
info@christchurch1735.org
ChristChurch1735.org

Staff

Robert J. Teagle
Executive Director

Paula D. Stallard
Assistant Director & Burying Ground Manager

Jill M. Sears
Development Director

Debbie P. Byram
Office Manager

1735 Times Contributors

Debbie Byram
Dr. Patrick J. Heffernan
Dr. Kathleen P. Moeller
Eppie Pole
Professional Printing Center
Jill Sears
Paula Stallard
George Taylor
Robert Teagle

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