Sunday Speaker Series Explores Religion in Early Virginia

The English colonists who landed at Jamestown in May 1607 brought with them a familiar institution: the Church of England. Established by law and supported by annual taxation, the parish church—with duties like public welfare, marking property lines, binding orphans out to learn trades, and reporting parishioners for offenses such as not attending church, swearing, and having children out of wedlock—was the unit of local government that had the greatest influence on Virginians' daily lives. Though it evolved differently in Virginia due to tobacco culture, geography and other forces, the church stood as the colony's official religion from 1619 until it was disestablished during the Revolution and the decades that followed.

Despite the primacy of the Church of England, the colony early on was home to a religious diversity that included Powhatan Indians, Africans, Quakers, Puritans and more. In the eighteenth century, there emerged Presbyterian, Baptist and other dissenters who challenged the long-standing authority of the Church of England and brought religious liberty to Virginia.

This fascinating religious history is the theme of Historic Christ Church & Museum’s 2021 Sunday Speaker Series, “A Variety of Religious Experiences: Natives, Africans and Europeans in Early Virginia.” The series begins on April 25 with Ed Bond, the John F. Woolverton Editor of Anglican and Episcopal History, who will present via Zoom “The Church of England in Early Virginia: The Essentials.” The series picks up in-person (if public health conditions allow) on May 16 with anthropologist Margaret Williamson Huber and “Religion of the Powhatan Indians of Virginia.”

The two fall in-person sessions feature James Ingram, Jr. on October 17 with “Gowan Pamphlet: Baptist Minister” and Monticello historian John Ragosta on November 7 with “Hornets, Snakes, Baptists & Presbyterians: Winning the Contest for Religious Freedom.” Please join us for this exciting journey back into early Virginia’s religious history. See page 8 for ticket information and more detailed descriptions of each presentation.

You’re Invited…
63rd Annual Meeting
Thursday, September 23 at 4 p.m.

Join us for the Foundation for Historic Christ Church’s 63rd Annual Meeting. Historian Jon Kukla presents “Humane, Mild, Gentle and Generous: The Catholic Spirit of Patrick Henry,” a look at Henry’s religious views and experiences from his youth through the founding of the American Republic. Dr. Kukla is the author of Patrick Henry: Champion of Liberty (2017), a work described as “a magnificent achievement” that “restores Patrick Henry to the front rank of American Revolutionary patriots.”

Dr. Kukla’s talk will take place inside the church or depending on public health conditions in a tented area outside the historic churchyard with socially-distanced tables and grab and go food and drinks. Please RSVP to Office Manager Nat McMaster at nmcmaster@christchurch1735.org or 804.438.2441 to reserve your spot. The Annual Meeting is free for active volunteers, members, and business partners.

Save the Date
Bringing Music to Life Concert Series Presents
Soprano Willsonia Boyer
Saturday, October 2
4:00 p.m.

Opera singer, concert artist and Lancaster County native Willsonia Boyer, accompanied by Suzanne Daniel, presents songs of America.
2020 Highlights

Brickmakers – Colonial Williamsburg brickmakers visited Historic Christ Church in January to see some of colonial Virginia’s finest brickwork. The team also traveled to Yeocomico church (1706; enlarged ca. 1740) in Westmoreland County, where Foundation for Historic Christ Church Secretary and Yeocomico member Steve Walker (red sweater) led them around.

Security Upgrade – As part of a campus security upgrade, Ed Brown and his team from ODCS Protection Systems installed cameras in the Bayne and Carter Centers and at strategic points outside that provide monitoring for the church, courtyard and other areas. ODCS also upgraded fire/heat sensors in the church, including the attic.

Volunteer Recognition Brunch – With Covid-19 making it impossible for volunteers to gather in the Bayne Center for the annual fall recognition brunch, Volunteer Council Chair Ed Feddeman came up with the idea for a drive-thru tailgate brunch. Board members and spouses pitched in to create a delicious, bagged lunch that volunteers picked up as they drove through the visitor parking lot. Despite the cold and rain, nearly 100 volunteers turned out for this special recognition event!

Rising Damp Work Begins - Carla and Eric Kuchar from the firm of Mesick Cohen Wilson Baker (MCWB) spent a day in late April making 3-D laser scans of the church, churchyard and surrounding landscape to create accurate topographical site plans and document the building in preparation for MCWB’s work on the drainage system to capture and divert stormwater from the church.

Dawe Award – Created in 1983 to honor Louise Belote Dawe (1890-1994), this award recognizes persons who have made outstanding contributions of time and talent to the successful fulfillment of the mission of the Foundation for Historic Christ Church. With her husband Gridley and good friend Helen Bulloch, Mrs. Dawe helped charter the Foundation in June 1958. This year’s recipients – Mary Hoerneman and Bob Cornelius – continue Mrs. Dawe’s legacy of service and stewardship. At the November board meeting FHCC President Jill Worth presented Mary’s award, which recognized her “capacious contributions” as docent, Volunteer Council Chair, Garden Club of Virginia liaison and in other leadership positions.

Press Books – Volunteer Eliza Wright assembles newspaper clippings for the press books. Dating back to 1902, these books provide an invaluable history of the Foundation and its volunteers. Eliza and her team copy original articles, obituaries, ads and other items onto acid-free paper to create these year-by-year accounts of all things related to Historic Christ Church.

Pulitzer Prize Winner – In February, two-time Pulitzer Prize winning historian Alan Taylor discussed his new book, Thomas Jefferson’s Education, a beautifully written account of Jefferson’s founding of the University of Virginia and the dilemmas slavery posed for Jefferson’s aspirations to transform his native Virginia through education. Joining Alan after his talk were (left) Bill Broaddus and (right) Ed Feddeman.

Basement Renovations – The transformation of the basement is now complete. After removing all the old wooden shelving, treating the space for mold, and applying PVC baseboards and a special coat of paint to prevent moisture, John Bowden and his intrepid crew installed metal shelves that will store artifacts and kitchen and bathroom supplies in this newly conditioned, more accessible space.

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The bookcase of account for the Foundation for Historic Christ Church is maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. The financial statements of the foundation are audited annually by Dixon Hughes & Company. Copies of the most recent audit report, and of the federal tax return (Form 990), are available for inspection in the foundation office.

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The Foundation has hundreds of good friends, business sponsors, and organizations, near and far, who evidence their commitment to the preservation and interpretation of Historic Christ Church & Museum from its establishment in 1735.

2020 Annual Giving

The Foundation thanks all of its friends and sponsors for their support, especially those who pledged $5,000 or more to the 1735 Society.

2020 Business Partners

BRONZE ($2000+)

Davenport, LLC

The Highland Studio

Northern Neck Service Group, LLC

Redlaw Mechanical, Inc.

DODC Protection Systems

Organic Green Lawn Care, Inc.

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Redlaw Mechanical, Inc.

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Rappahannock Hang-Ups, Inc.

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Riggs Ward Design

Lisson, Davis & Associates

McBride, Gault & Associates

Rappahannock Hang-Ups, Inc.

Redlaw Mechanical, Inc.

Northern Neck Service Group, LLC

Riggs Ward Design

Lisson, Davis & Associates

McBride, Gault & Associates

Rappahannock Hang-Ups, Inc.

Redlaw Mechanical, Inc.
Remembering Friends of Christ Church

Lois W. French
(December 9, 1929 – February 12, 2021)
Lois Waterbury French joined the Board of Directors on May 21, 1987. Eight years later her peers elected her Senior Vice President, and from 1976 to 1999 she led the Foundation as President. Lois served on multiple committees, including Horticulture, Executive, Nominating, Development, Annual Meeting, and Finance, on which she was still an active member in 2010–2011. Gracious and smart, volunteers remember Lois’ genuine smile, distinct voice and friendly demeanor as she worked to carry forth the Foundation’s mission for nearly 25 years.

Sibyl D. Bayne
(January 8, 1922 – January 28, 2021)
A Life Member of the Foundation for Historic Christ Church, Sibyl Drake Bayne was an accomplished artist who used her brush and pencil to solve the Gift Shop’s sales problem. In 1982-83 she served as illustrator for a children’s coloring book FHCC published in 1983.

John H. Hunt II
(April 25, 1947 – March 4, 2021)
John Herbert Hunt II joined the Board of Directors in May 1986, serving for over 27 years as Treasurer (1988–2003; 2017–2020), Vice President (2003–2005) and President (2005–2009). John ensured FHCC remained on solid financial footing and enlisted support from business and community leaders around the Northern Neck. As President he guided FHCC through its 50th Anniversary site improvement project that created the modern campus and museum visitors enjoy today. He and his beloved wife Pat hosted the Foundation’s 50th birthday celebration, leading toasts under the tent on a memorable summer evening in 2008. Trusted friend, mentor and colleague, John epitomized the virtues and values that have made the Foundation a success for more than six decades.

Edmund ( Ned) Berkeley, Jr.
(April 1, 1937 – December 29, 2020)
An archivist who served as the University of Virginia’s Director of Special Collections, Ned Berkeley created the digital archive The Diary Correspondence and Papers of Robert “King” Carter of Virginia, 1701 to 1732. Ned painstakingly transcribed, edited, and annotated Carter’s papers, incorporating them into an online, searchable database that provides important insights into early-eighteenth-century Virginia across a range of topics: tobacco, the transatlantic economy, slavery, indentured servitude, politics, family, women, health, travel, foodways, fashion, architecture, and more. In 2018 the Foundation for Historic Christ Church accepted Ned’s gracious offer to host the site through its own website. Ned built on the work of his uncle Francis Berkeley, who first transcribed some of Carter’s diaries and letterbooks in 1961.

Volunteers and Friends In Memoriam 2020–2021

Ellen D. W. Bishop
Linda D. Byrum
Patricia G. Calkins
Edward A. (Ed) Chappell
The Right Reverend Gordon T. Charterton, Jr.
William N. Crooner
Colonel Curtis L. Dickinson, USA (Ret)
James P. Harnsberger
Geraldine (Gerry) Hort Holmes
Christabel Virginia Conley Kelley
Edward M. Kidwell
Gilbert S. Parker
Clark M. Schumacher
Barbara T. Shanklin
Janice H. Shanks
Ennolls A. (E) Stephens, Jr.
Jane M. Towner

Dr. Marcus M. Key, Jr.
(March 2, 1924 – October 31, 2020)
World War II B-29 radar navigator-bombardier and former Assistant Surgeon General, Dr. Marcus Key brought his talents to Historic Christ Church when he and his wife Pam moved to Wicomico in 1993. Dr. Key became a vital part of the Foundation’s Parish Profile Project, which used Lancaster County records to reconstruct the community of Christ Church Parish in 1720-1750. With Joan Alfords and cartographer James Gearhart, Dr. Key created a map that identified the names and holdings of each landowner in the parish ca. 1750. He and Joan also documented the original land patent on which John Carter constructed the first Christ Church in 1670.

Dr. Marcus Key’s meticulous research helped create this map of Church Parish ca. 1750 that identified landholders and key landmarks, such as mills, warehousehouses, ferries, ghode boats and more.

The Reverend Hugh C. White III
(May 4, 1938 – February 5, 2020)
Rector at Grace Episcopal in Kilmarnock from 1996–2004, the Reverend Hugh C. White III shared his knowledge and love of church history, architecture, preservation, and decorative arts to enhance the Foundation’s mission with a national audience. Hugh served as President from 2009–2011 and held positions on the Finance, Cultural Resource Management, Marketing, Governance and Development committees. His passion for the arts helped the Foundation bring Handel’s music and Shakespeare’s plays to the Northern Neck as well as memorable programs with antiquarian scholars Sampson Priddy and Ken Farner. Hugh led volunteer training programs, developed speaker series and conducted Rogation Day services in the churchyard.

Hugh White takes on the role of a colonial Virginian during a special event at Christ Church.

Volunteers and Friends In Memoriam 2020–2021

ROGER R. MUCK
(Feb 1996 – Jan 2011)
Since 1996, Roger Muck’s rich, distinctive voice has welcomed thousands of visitors to Historic Christ Church. In an orientation video he helped write and produce, Muck introduces Crusaders to this incredible building, a structure that he says “remains in its simple yet graceful beauty with almost unamended architectural purity as a living testament to our ancestors’ confidence in the future of America.” Muck’s elegant narration and powerful words created a timeless film that, like Christ Church, remains a model of non-profit organizations. Many became long-serving volunteers; others took on special projects that supported the Foundation’s mission. In recent months, the Foundation lost some of these foremost champions and friends. We remember them and their contributions to this special place.

For nearly three centuries, Christ Church has stood as one of America’s great buildings, inspiring friends and admirers from all walks of life. Students of architecture praise its celebrated brickwork and classical entablature. Artists find beauty in its elegant proportions and symmetry. Scholars uncover the story of life in a Virginia parish and the transformation of a colony with an established church to an independent Commonwealth that proclaimed religious liberty to be a natural right. Preservationists marvel at how this incredible structure remains today largely “as it came from the hands of its builders.”

These same friends and admirers have contributed to another part of the Christ Church story: the success of the Foundation for Historic Christ Church, which for more than six decades has been a model of non-profit organizations. Many became long-serving volunteers; others took on special projects that supported the Foundation’s mission. In recent months, the Foundation lost some of these foremost champions and friends. We remember them and their contributions to this special place.
**New Discoveries**

Old buildings never share all their secrets. Missing documents like Christ Church Parish’s lost first vestry book (1665-1799) sometimes leave gaps in the historical record. Alterations to a structure or landscape may go undocumented. On occasion the physical evidence does not allow for a full explanation, such as the asymmetrical pediments in Christ Church’s chancel.

But there are always new things to discover. Some want the archaeologist’s tutorial, like the extraordinary excavations at Jamestown or Pinky Harrington’s at Christ Church in 1959 that uncovered the footings of the original churchyard wall. Others come from a serendipitous find in the archives or a private residence, like Mary F. Goodwin’s discovery of the Bodleian Plate at Oxford University in 1929 or Polly Montague Taylor in 1964 locating the original pen-and-ink architectural drawings for Mendelssohn. Still others come from a fresh set of eyes seeing what no one else has before. Such was the case for Christ Church a few years ago when a boy about ten years old noticed the initials “RC” and the date “1749” on the Carter pew. The most plausible explanation is that Robert Carter III notched these into his grandfather’s pew shortly before the young man departed that year for study in London. How many times had those who visit and study the church stood the Carter pew only to miss this historic graffiti? This chance discovery now allows docents to connect these initials to the incredible story of Robert Carter III’s 1791 Deed of Emanicipation.

New discoveries build new knowledge. A few years ago, architectural historian Carl Lounsbury shared a watercolor of Christ Church he had found at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP). Created by David Johnson Kennedy, the painting depicts the north side of Christ Church, complete with the Kelley family burial plot, an iron enclosure around the Carter tombs, and a large number of grave markers scattered about the churchyard.

In the fall of 2019, a researcher found on Wikipedia of all places a link to Kennedy’s watercolor in the HSP’s digital library. Astonishingly, the HSP also had a ca. 1855 daguerreotype taken from the same elevation as Kennedy’s watercolor. Laterally reversed—or a mirror image—as most daguerreotypes were, the view presages the earliest documented photograph of Christ Church by nearly 30 years. It captures the Kelley plot shortly after its construction, showing the finials and stringers that originally capped the brick wall around the Kelley markers and that today outline the plot at its base. The daguerreotype also shows the iron fencing around the Carter tombs that Bishop William Meade described in 1838 as “a neat enclosure, recently put up.”

**Doing History During a Pandemic**

As the realities of the coronavirus pandemic set in over March 2020, museums across the country closed their doors and began to develop new ways to reach audiences. At Historic Christ Church & Museum (HCC&M), staff created a page on ChristChurch1735.org called History at Home, where visitors can explore Christ Church’s virtual tour, take in a musical performance inside the church by Dale Jett of the legendary Carter family, listen to an oral history from a volunteer who attended homecoming services here in the 1930s, enjoy a presentation from one of our spring training programs or living history reenactments, print out a children’s activity book, explore primary documents like the 1802 Glebe Act, and more.

HCC&M also looked for a way to engage volunteers and friends while supporting the business community, especially restaurants, which had to suspend in-person dining almost overnight in the early stages of the pandemic. On March 27, 2020, HCC&M launched History Mystery. The Friday morning contests asked questions related to colonial Virginia and the broader transatlantic world. The first twenty winners earned $25 gift certificates (purchased with funds donated by staff and volunteers) to a local restaurant or business.

For many, this weekly journey into the past offered a brief respite from the stress, sadness and isolation wrought by the virus. Carter Lively, who holds the record with ten wins, described History Mystery as “a valuable exercise in these tumultuous times when staying at home can get a bit monotonous. For me, it gives me a good mental workout once a week, free from the coronavirus, ever present political bombardments, and worries about a persistent slow-draining kitchen sink. It’s a welcome relief.” Carter and other winners who lived outside the area were gracious to donate their winning gift certificates back to the contest. Thanks to all of you who have played along this past year!

**A SAMPLE OF HISTORY MYSTERY QUESTIONS**

A. For what enslaved couple at Nomini Hall in July 1774 did tutor Philip Vickers Fithian draw up a list of the names and ages of their children?

B. Who printed Thomas Jefferson’s A Summary View of the Rights of British America (1774)?

C. What did St. Mary’s White Chapel parishioner Richard Price do in church on November 1, 1671 to earn a reprimand from the Lancaster County court for his rude irreligious & uncivill manner[1]?

D. How did Robert Carter hurt his wrist in December 1717, an injury Carter feared would “keep me a housebird all this winter”?

E. Who was the enslaved man who helped introduce the first smallpox inoculation experiments in America?

F. What did George Brent and James Polland count 599,482 of in a section of Christ Church Parish in June 1727?

G. What board game, one of the world’s oldest, did Christ Church Parish minister David Carrive own?

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The word “Corrotoman” is probably a corruption of “Cuttatawomen,” the name of two Native American tribes of the Powhatan Confederacy. The lower tribe inhabited lands near the mouth of the Rappahannock River. Captain John Smith estimates in his 1612 pamphlet, *A Map of Virginia with a Description of the Country*, that these numbered about 30 “fighting men.” As the English began to settle the area in the mid-seventeenth century, small tribes were ordered to merge. It is likely that the Cuttatawomen merged with the Wicomico and relocated farther north. In 2009, Mr. and Mrs. James F. Chase, Jr. donated to the museum at Historic Christ Church several Native American stone tools that had been found on their farmyards in White Stone. The largest of these resembled an arrowhead. Similar items known as “cupstones” or “hunting stones” are among the most common relics of Native American habitation. However, the indentations in these are often smaller. The name, of course, implies that they were used for tasks such as cracking nuts, but other possibilities have been proposed.

The wide diameter and shallow depth of the depression in our “amul” seems to indicate a different application. Archaeologist Mike Clem at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources believes that it is a metate, used for grinding grain, but admits that it would be an odd example. Before European contact, variations of the metate were used all over North America. Because it is so flat and uniform, he argues that it is from a later period and had a very specialized purpose. Unfortunately, objects found outside of a designated archaeological site are often much harder to identify, so we may never know more than this. The simple fact that it exists, however, is a good reminder of the people who lived here long before Christ Church was built.
April 25 | Ed Bond (Presented via Zoom)
The Church of England in Early Virginia: The Essentials

Historian Ed Bond investigates the Church of England, which arrived with the first colonists who settled Virginia. As it struggled to gain a solid footing and transfer its administrative structure to North America, the church became dominated by the laity but for many years continued to carry out numerous secular duties just as the Church of England did in England.

May 16 | Margaret Williamson Huber
Religion of the Powhatan Indians of Virginia

Anthropologist Margaret Williamson Huber explores the religious ideas and practices of the Powhatan Indians, both those of lay people and the shamans, or quiaocsucks, including their importance in Powhatan governance. Huber will describe Indian rituals and symbolism as well as Powhatan reactions to Spanish and English attempts to convert them to Christianity.

October 17 | James Ingram, Jr.
Gowan Pamphlet: Baptist Minister

Colonial Williamsburg historian James Ingram, Jr. shares the inspiring story of Gowan Pamphlet, an enslaved preacher who gained his freedom and helped found First Baptist Church in Williamsburg, one of the nation’s oldest African-American congregations. Ingram, who has portrayed Pamphlet since 1998, will show how Pamphlet negotiated the strictures imposed by the law and slave owners to lead a ministry that thrives to this day.

November 7 | John Ragosta
Hornets, Snakes, Baptists & Presbyterians: Winning the Contest for Religious Freedom

Monticello historian John Ragosta traces the relatively unknown role of Virginia’s religious dissenters, primarily Baptist and Presbyterian evangelicals, in both winning the American Revolution and in establishing religious liberty, creating the strict separation of church and state embodied in Thomas Jefferson’s eloquent “Statute for Establishing Religious Freedom.”