

This is our annual Christmas appeal on behalf of Saint Cuthbert's Chapel on MacMahan Island.

As most of you are aware, the history of the Chapel coincides with the very founding of MacMahan Island as a summer community. Services were held in different locations on MacMahan beginning with the formation of the Sheepscoot Island Company in 1881. The Chapel was completed in 1902 after fundraising and a land grant from the Island Company. Services have been held weekly since that date, and St. Cuthbert's Chapel has seen a myriad of Sunday services, including baptisms, weddings and funerals. The Chapel has remained a place of worship and thanksgiving for one hundred thirteen years.

Many islanders have made memorial gifts. The reredos was given in memory of Bowdoin Nealy, the altar candlesticks and cross in memory of the Rev. and Mrs. Charles Whittemore, and the altar in memory of Sophia Raymond Brown. More recently, the kneelers, stole and antependium were designed by Martha Rogers Zimilies and Barbara McDougal, and stitched with loving care by many islanders. Steve Baumgartner built the new "low" altar in 2015, and Annsi Stephano has offered to fund the repairs to the bell tower with work to be completed in 2016. Buzz Getschel has seen to the repairs to the sconces and, of course, the donation of Eastcot as the rectory by Marshall and Bertha Cole. Natalie Andrews recently arranged for the repair and cleaning of the sculpture on either side of the altar. In addition, many Islanders make annual gifts of time and talent throughout the Summer to maintain and prepare the Chapel for worship services. Our apologies if we missed other recent donations.

The purpose of this letter is to encourage you to join with those, both past and present, in making a Christmas gift to support the operating budget of St. Cuthbert's Chapel so that it may remain in its historic role as an important part of our island life. Last summer, the memorial service paid tribute to the lives of Jane Walker Kennedy, Elizabeth Kennedy Massanek, and George Getschel. At that moving service, attended by most islanders, the congregation greeted one another graciously amidst a year of some turmoil. The Chapel remains as it always has, a place where we can worship, give thanks for our lovely island home, and put aside our differences.

We will conclude by borrowing a quote from Carl Sandburg's "Special Starlight" which was sent this Christmas season from Ian Markham, Dean of the Virginia Theological Seminary. We believe that these words are fitting for this Christmas season as we pray for those in crisis all over the world.

*"Shall all wanderers over the Earth, all homeless ones,
All against whom doors are shut and words unspoken-
Shall these find the Earth less strange tonight?
Shall they hear news, a whisper on the night wind?
'A child is born' The meek shall inherit the Earth'
'and the crucified Him...they spat upon Him,
and He rose from the dead"*

*A Blessed Christmas to All,
The Saint Cuthbert's Chapel Committee*

Gifts this Christmas season may be sent to:

*Annsi Stephano, Treasurer
2709 River Road
New Hope, PA 18938*

Gifts to St. Cuthbert's Chapel are tax-deductible as allowed by law.