



THE CENTENNIAL

*A Celebration of the
100 year Anniversary of
Christ Church Ithan*

1916-2016

THE PROLOGUE

When we commemorate the centennial anniversary of the construction of a church we tend to think in terms of “bricks and mortar,” a grand edifice that we inhabit, when actually a church is so much more than that. A building such as Christ Church Ithan, constructed 100 years ago, for a different time and a different world, as beautiful as it is, can fade into irrelevancy if we lose sight of its real purpose. The first phase of this Centennial Project celebrates the laying of the cornerstone in 1916. As we launch this project, it is important to remember that it is Christ Jesus who is the real cornerstone of our Church. For one hundred years, people have been formed here in the Way of Jesus. They have been fed here in Word and Sacrament to be the Body of Christ in the world. This has been a place where hungers have been satisfied, friendships have been formed, healing has happened, and real life human stories filled with struggles and hopes have been shared. If these stones could talk, a cacophony of saintly voices would be heard, all proclaiming the glory of God, witnessing to the faith journeys of our spiritual ancestors that inspire and encourage us along the way. C.S. Lewis reminds us: “the Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs.” And so, like our spiritual ancestors, let us keep our eyes fixed on Christ and be clear about our purpose in this place.

We would be negligent to gloss over the fact that change is a constant in our history. The road from a small wooden chapel commissioned by St. Martin’s Church, to Chandler’s stone chapel, to being declared an independent parish by the Diocese, required a lot of change. And so, part of being a faith community is realizing that change is inevitable. Change is a good thing as it shapes and renews us,

making us better, as we adapt to the ever-changing circumstances of life all around us. Let us not fear change, as we look to our future together.

I was struck by something noted in the section of this booklet about the stained glass windows. It concerned the inscription that the donor insisted be placed on the Transfiguration and Last Supper windows. He clearly wanted “in living memory” not “in loving memory” inscribed, as his mother and wife in whose honor they were given, were still alive at the time of the commissioning. “In Living Memory” should be the theme of this Centennial Project! There is great power in our remembering. If we remember well, our spiritual ancestors come alive for us. Rather than being voices from a distant past, they can be alive and real and beckoning us forward into a future filled with hope and possibility. I look forward to the second phase of this Centennial Project that will focus on this living history.

So, let us use this Centennial time over the next three years to remember well. Let us shape a future that is alive with mission as we seek to continue to form people in Jesus’ Way and support one another as we live out our faith in a challenging and questioning world. May this beautiful edifice that is Christ Church, Ithan, the place where we gather to worship and praise our God, be a constant reminder that everything we do is for God’s honor and glory. And at the same time, may we be reminded of the words of St. Paul to the people of Ephesus where he notes that each of us too are being “built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.” Our God lives with us and in us and through us. To God be the honor and glory!

In Christ,
The Rev. John W. Sosnowski
Interim Rector, Christ Church, Ithan

THE CENTENNIAL

FEATURES

- 4 The Story of a Church
- 9 The Architecture of Christ Church Ithan
- 16 Theophilus Parsons Chandler, Jr.
- 20 The Stained Glass
- 22 History of Ithan Village
- 28 Banjotown



THE CENTENNIAL PROJECT

As we approach the centennial anniversary of our church, a project has been created to look back over the past 100 years, and also look ahead to develop a vision and plan for the future. The project is divided into three phases:

- I Research the documents and artifacts related to the art and architecture of the church building whose construction started in 1916.
- II Develop a living history of the people and programs of the parish over the course of time. This will involve church documents, surveying past and present parishioners, pictures and many good memories and stories.
- III Create a virtual vision of the next 100 years and look into the cultural and generational factors that will enhance the future growth of our parish in the community.

The following publication is the first of three that will bring the past into the present day.

THE STORY OF A CHURCH

The little stone church on the Conestoga Road, one of the first “highways” of the American colonial era, is commemorating the one-hundredth anniversary of the placement of the cornerstone in 1916. This beautifully simple gothic church is a gift to God and his people by a gifted architect who designed and built the “stone chapel” on his own land with his own funds. One hundred years later it stands as a spiritual sanctuary by the side of the Conestoga Road just exactly as it was when Theophilus Parsons Chandler had completed his creation.

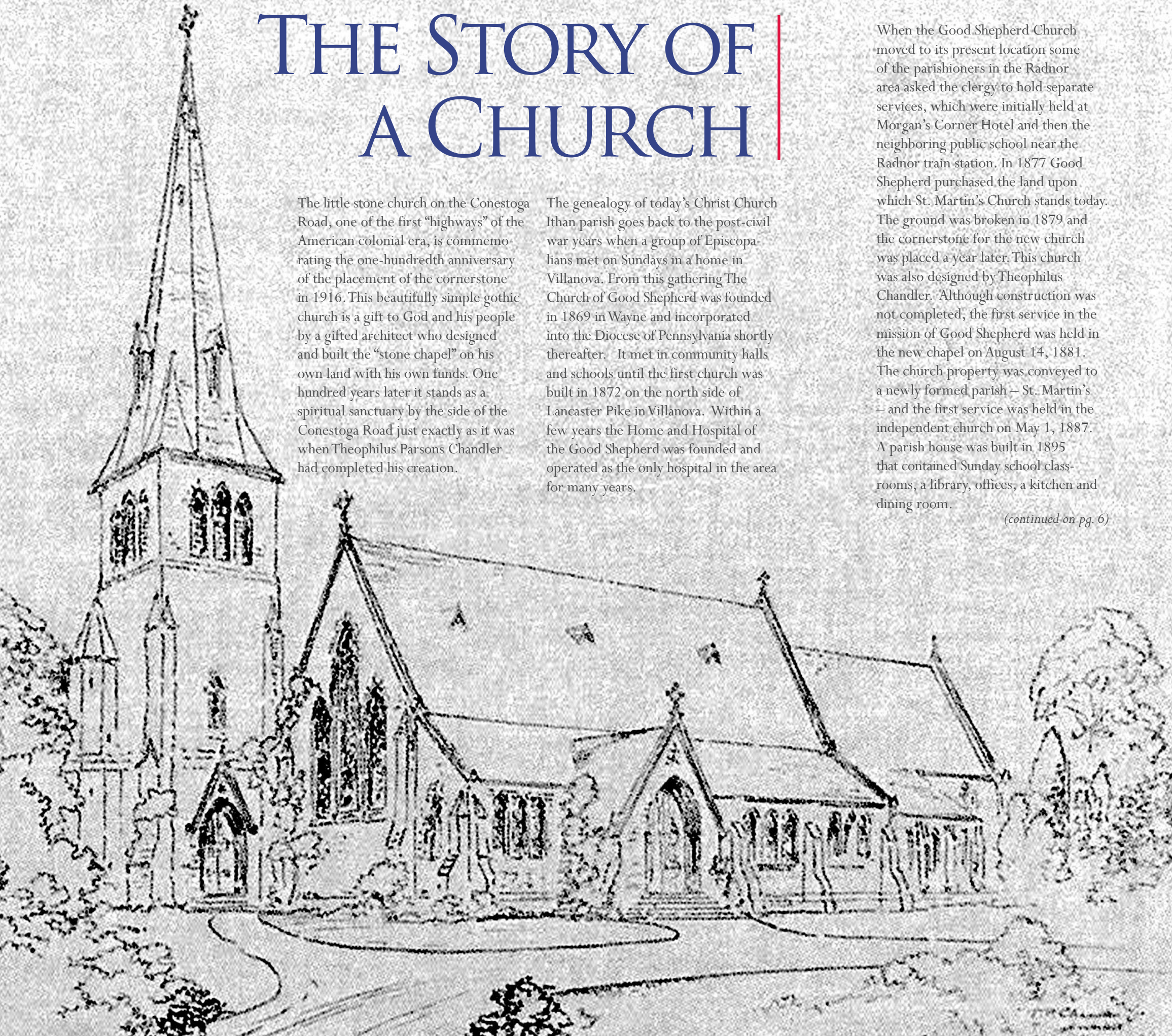
The genealogy of today’s Christ Church Ithan parish goes back to the post-civil war years when a group of Episcopalians met on Sundays in a home in Villanova. From this gathering The Church of Good Shepherd was founded in 1869 in Wayne and incorporated into the Diocese of Pennsylvania shortly thereafter. It met in community halls and schools until the first church was built in 1872 on the north side of Lancaster Pike in Villanova. Within a few years the Home and Hospital of the Good Shepherd was founded and operated as the only hospital in the area for many years.

When the Good Shepherd Church moved to its present location some of the parishioners in the Radnor area asked the clergy to hold separate services, which were initially held at Morgan’s Corner Hotel and then the neighboring public school near the Radnor train station. In 1877 Good Shepherd purchased the land upon which St. Martin’s Church stands today. The ground was broken in 1879 and the cornerstone for the new church was placed a year later. This church was also designed by Theophilus Chandler. Although construction was not completed, the first service in the mission of Good Shepherd was held in the new chapel on August 14, 1881. The church property was conveyed to a newly formed parish – St. Martin’s – and the first service was held in the independent church on May 1, 1887. A parish house was built in 1895 that contained Sunday school classrooms, a library, offices, a kitchen and dining room.

(continued on pg. 6)

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

Paul’s letter to the Ephesians 2:19-22



THE STORY OF A CHURCH

As the area developed under the impetus of the new Main Line of the railroad, the estates and farms grew in number, as did the size of their staffs. This led to a need to create a house of worship for the farmhands and their families in the small town of Ithan under the auspices of St. Martin's Church. In November 1894, after two years of discussion, the vestry appropriated \$700 for the expedited construction of a wooden frame chapel located on donated land just north of the intersection of Conestoga and Radnor-Chester Roads. Two months later the first service was held on January 20, 1895 with 135 people in attendance. For the next 25 years the "wooden chapel at Ithan" was an active church community and had a balanced budget with contributions being made to its sponsor — St. Martin's Church. St. Martin's Church was expanded by an addition to the chancel that was designed by Theophilus Chandler. At this time the parish was 110 families and 90 students in the Sunday School.

One of several large parcels of land in the Ithan area was the "Ithan Farm" that was owned by Theophilus Chandler and his wife Sophie Madeline DuPont Chandler. It was upon this land that extended from Newtown Road to Conestoga Road that this preeminent Philadelphia architect of his time decided to design and build a simple gothic style, country church. This plan was first proposed to the Diocese on November 8, 1916 when Mr. Chandler met with the secretary of the Commission of Church Buildings, to discuss his plan for a chapel that would be donated to St. Martin's Parish. The Diocese official noted: "The work is so advanced that he (Mr. Chandler) tells me he has asked



St. Martin's Church 1887

that you will arrange for the laying of the cornerstone," which took place the next month. Mr. Chandler was advised that it would be necessary under canonical law to first deed the chapel to the Diocese which in turn would arrange for it to come under the jurisdiction of St. Martin's Church. However, from

the vestry minutes of St. Martin's it would appear that they were first informed of Mr. Chandler's generous gift of a beautiful stone gothic chapel at the vestry meeting of September 22, 1919. After some discussion, it was agreed by unanimous vote at the next vestry meeting to accept his "stone



St. Martin's wooden chapel in Ithan 1895

chapel at Ithan" under certain conditions. The stipulations were that the Chandlers provide \$300, the annual supply of coal, and that the maintenance of the chapel be "remembered" in their will. The latter was done at the time of Theophilus Chandler's death in 1928 by his wife Sophie DuPont Chandler when she created an endowment of \$50,000 in support of her husband's special gift to God and the people who worshiped there.

The formal consecration of the new Ithan Chapel of St. Martin's Church by the Bishop of the Diocese was held on All Saints Day, November 1919. The



Theophilus Chandler holding model of his stone chapel at Ithan

first service was conducted by the rector of St. Martin's Church the next day, November 2, 1919 at 4 PM. For the next 10 years services were

conducted at the Ithan Chapel at 9 AM by the rectors of St. Martin's Church between the two Sunday services there. During this time the congregation at the chapel grew and a curate was engaged to conduct activities at the Ithan Chapel. Attendance at the Sunday services varied with the weather because of a lack of a heating system, requiring the people in the pews to have lap robes for warmth.

During the early days of the new "stone chapel at Ithan" the operating and repair expenses of the new chapel were running higher than anticipated and Mrs. Chandler was picking up the costs of repairs to the stonework. At several vestry meetings from 1925 to 1927 there were discussions about the mission at Ithan becoming independent from St. Martin's. At subsequent vestry meetings there was indecision about taking this course, and in fact, a strong effort was put forth to gain title to the land and use it as a cemetery. However, a burial ground was expressly prohibited in the Chandlers' bequest. In the years that followed the congregation at the Ithan Chapel began to increase and a curate was placed in charge. This was followed by thoughts of becoming an independent parish. This was known by the vestry of St. Martin's as the "separation project" and was not well received at that time. This was the beginning of several conflicts between the Ithan Chapel and St. Martin's. One complaint was the lack of representation on the vestry by the Ithan Chapel congregation. This resulted in the appointment of three representatives to the vestry.

The Sunday School program which started in the basement of the Ithan

Chapel had been moved to St. Martin's in 1925. In 1952 they were resumed at the Chapel. A new curate was hired and charged with the responsibility of developing both the Chapel and the Sunday School. Because of his energy and dedication the growth of both the Chapel and the Sunday School was enhanced. However, this led to a problem with overcrowding in the basement during the Sunday School sessions. In 1954 the Executive Committee of St. Martin's recommended that a Parish House be built adjacent to the Ithan Chapel that could be used by Chapel and Church for Sunday School and other parish functions.

The growth of both congregations from 1955 to 1958 made it a pressing problem to have an independently functioning parish at Ithan Chapel with its own Rector and Vestry. The vestry of St. Martin's went on record on May 7, 1957 that the Chapel at Ithan be given maximum autonomy with the view of eventual independence.

In support of this move toward autonomy an associate minister was assigned to Ithan Chapel to provide all of the pastoral and liturgical functions and to have full responsibility for the Sunday School, as well as the Altar and Acolyte Guilds. However, the administrative and financial matters remained with the rector of St. Martin's Church and many of the parish organizations would function jointly. Each committee of the vestry would have a chairman and a co-chairman, who would represent Ithan Chapel. A curate was assigned as "Associate Rector" of Ithan Chapel for one year.

(continued on pg. 8)

At a March 13, 1958 meeting the Committee of Ten elected a temporary vestry and selected the name "Christ Church Ithan as the name for the new parish. About a week later an application as an independent parish was delivered to the Diocese and a week later it was approved by the Bishop. During this process the curate that was serving at the Ithan Chapel of St. Martin's resigned, but the new vestry immediately requested, by a formal resolution, to have Rev. Elof Johnson serve as the first rector of Christ Church Ithan. By-laws and articles of incorporation were drafted by John Clarke, a member of the first elected vestry who later became Chancellor and long-term member of Christ Church Ithan. The final step to autonomy took place at the 174th annual convention of the Diocese on May 4th and 5th with the passage of the following resolution:

"RESOLVED, that CHRIST CHURCH ITHAN, be admitted into union with the convention but without vote in this Convention; that the proposed Articles of Incorporation of CHRIST CHURCH ITHAN be approved by the Convention and that permission be given to apply to the proper court to grant the same".

The next years of the new parish's life saw great growth, vitality and active participation in all ministries and organizations of Christ Church Ithan. Church attendance on Sundays often exceeded the seating capacity and enrollment in the Sunday School, Youth Group and adult education was consistently high.

- George J. Peckham, MD



To enter such a church is a great spiritual experience for the solitude, emptiness, solidity, permanence, grace, cleanliness and the very smell of it induces reflections and a sense of repose that one experiences in no other way, except in a beautiful wood in spring or on a mountain top.

- Nigel Nicholson

Introduction to English Country Churches, 1985

THE ARCHITECTURE OF CHRIST CHURCH ITHAN

Christ Church Ithan is a very fine example of early church architecture in America. Built from 1916 to 1919, the chapel is an interesting combination of both 18th century and 19th century preferences in church design. The simple stone massing of the body of the church is clearly 18th century, recalling the simplicity of English country churches, which of course, were the inspiration for early Anglican American churches. The openings in the body of the church, windows and doors, have a slight Gothic shape but overall there is a more medieval character to the church. The play of the solid to void as seen in the relationship of the masonry walls to the small stained glass windows is more

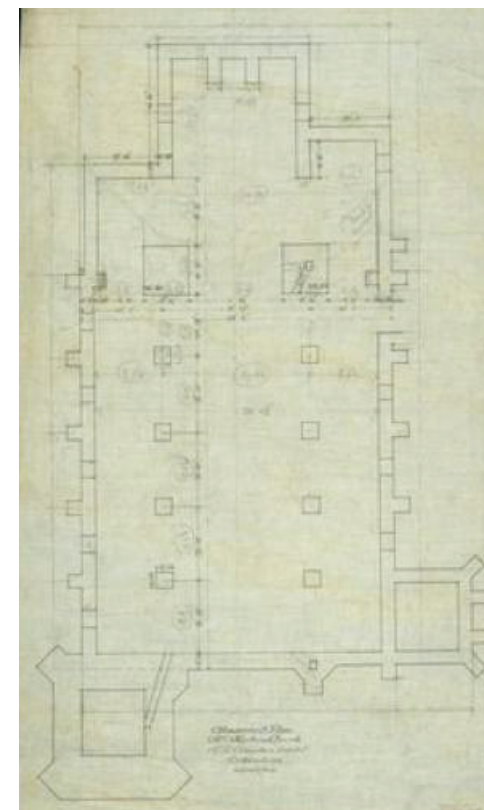
medieval than Gothic. This medieval character is also felt in the sanctuary, where the interior is architecturally very straight forward and not the least bit decorative. The masonry columns help give the space a solidity and permanence which is quite remarkable.

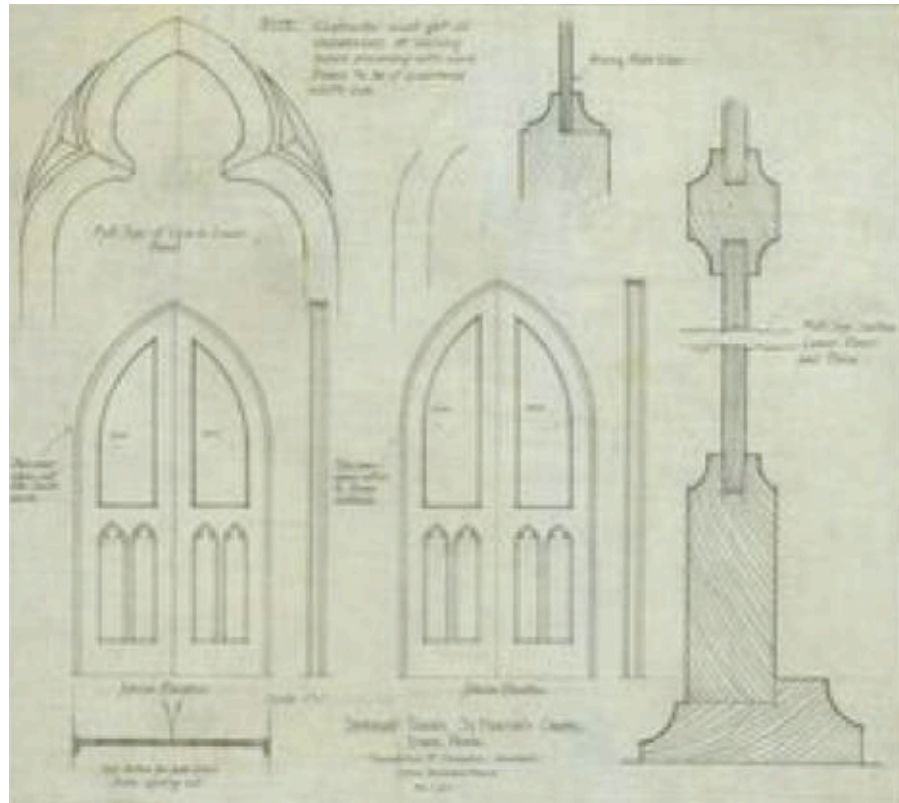
The tower and the spire of Christ Church Ithan chapel, however, are architectural elements more typical of the 19th century. In the early and mid-19th century, churches in America started to add bell towers and steeples to the simple massing of the body of the church. In Philadelphia, the famous 19th century architect William Strickland was commissioned to add

a somewhat overly large tower to the historic St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Society Hill. Christ Church in Old City struggled for a number of years attempting to add a prominent tower. Ultimately, master builder Robert Smith added a gigantic tower and steeple which dwarfed the church proper and remained the tallest building on the continent for 56 years. Almost every denomination, if it had the finances, added towers to their existing church structure.

It seems that Chandler was much aware of this movement to add height and prominence to church buildings. So, when he designed the Christ Church

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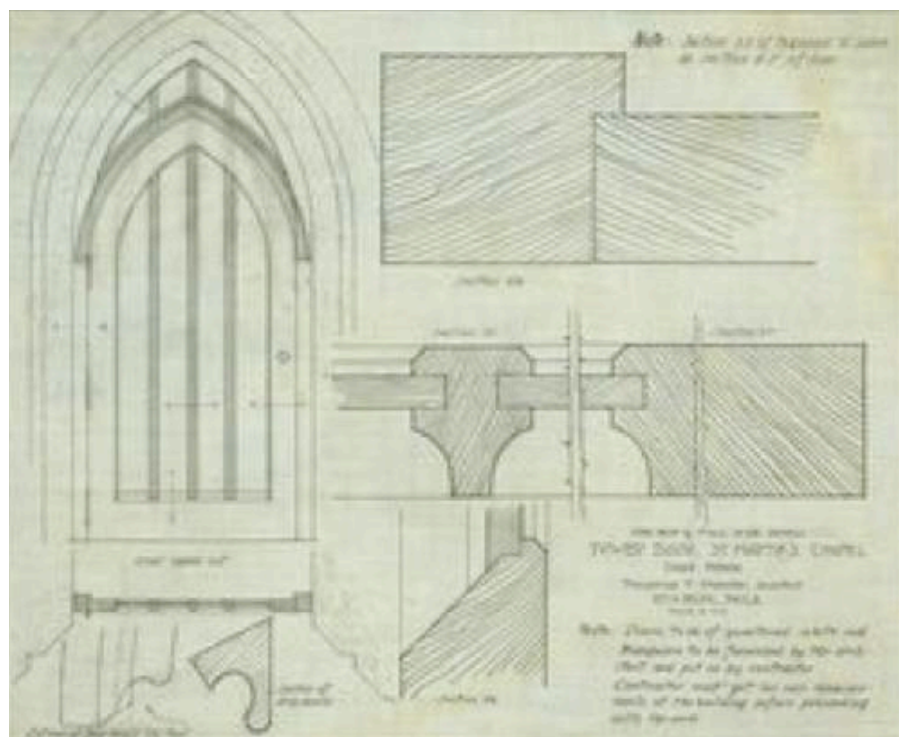


Ithan chapel he added a very impressive tower. To be consistent with his preference for the medieval character of the structure, he built the steeple in masonry to match the stone walls, a gesture that would not have been seen on a truly Gothic building. Typically, steeples were constructed of wood, often quite elaborate with Gothic details, while the towers themselves were built of masonry in a more simple fashion. Unfortunately, the choice of a masonry steeple was not ideal, causing numerous water concerns over the years.

It is said that Theophilus Chandler was concerned about being ostentatious with this private chapel on his and his wife's land. Surely, this could be true. However, I would argue that he consistently preferred to design his buildings with a certain "heaviness" that came from his detailing the



THE ARCHITECTURE OF CHRIST CHURCH ITHAN



structure with large amounts of masonry. There is a medieval character to many of his projects. I would suggest that Christ Church Ithan is a wonderful example of his work and his architectural preferences.

It is a tribute to the many congregations which have occupied Christ Church Ithan that the building has been so well maintained and has seen so little intervention. The chapel remains in its original condition and functions much as it did one hundred years ago.

- James Oleg Kruhly, FAIA



CONSTRUCTION OF THE WALLS



Theophilus Chandler designed Christ Church at his studio near his home during the later years of his life. He did all of the drawings and plans for the “stone chapel at Ithan” himself in a minimalist gothic style. Chandler would make small drawings of the windows and walls and then have a helper create full scale renditions of the placement of stones on large sheets of brown paper. These were then taken to the stonecutter at the quarry in King of Prussia and each stone would be individually cut to match the stones to be used in that section of the wall depicted on the full scale drawing.

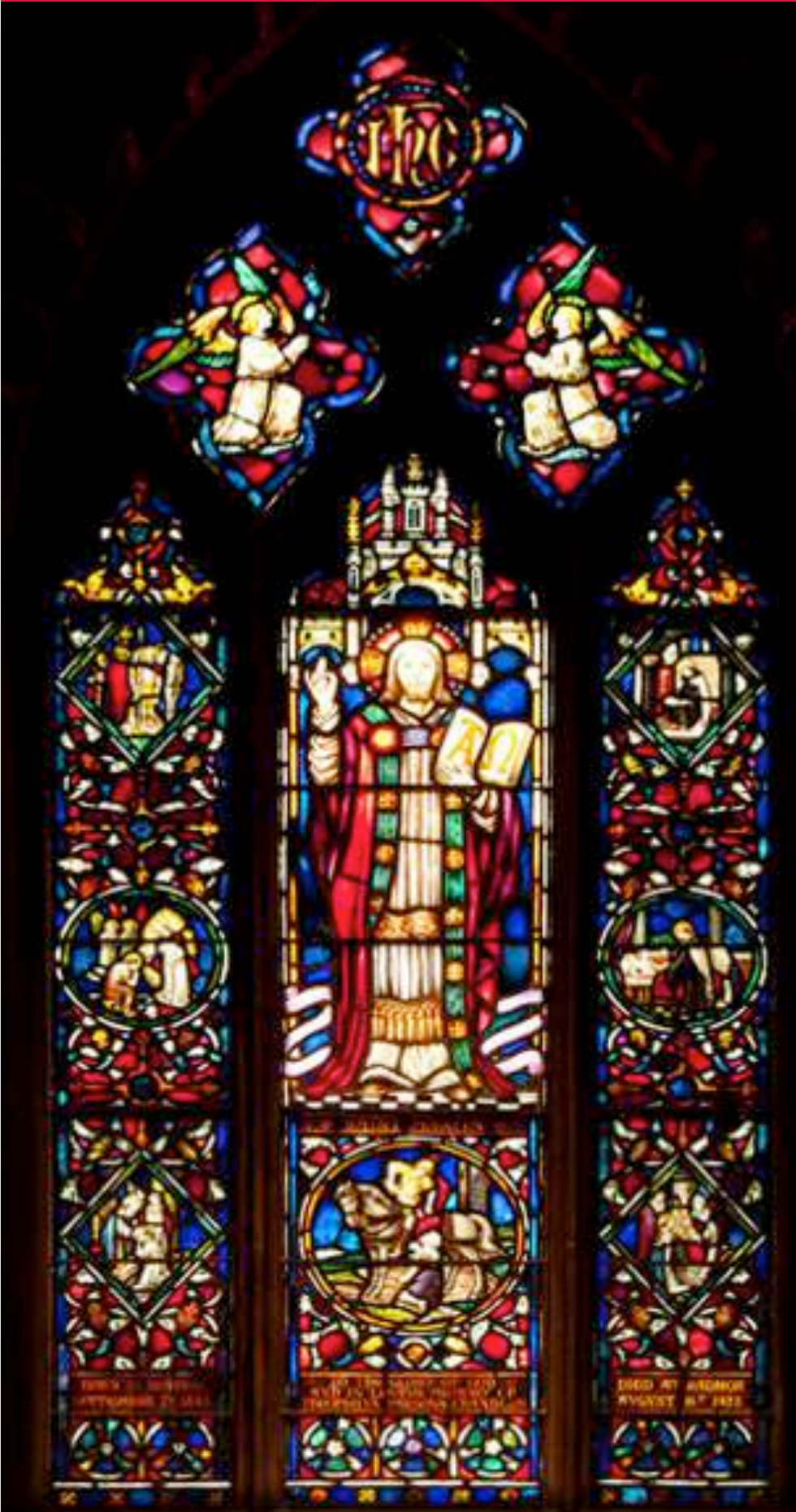
PIGEONS IN THE BELFRY

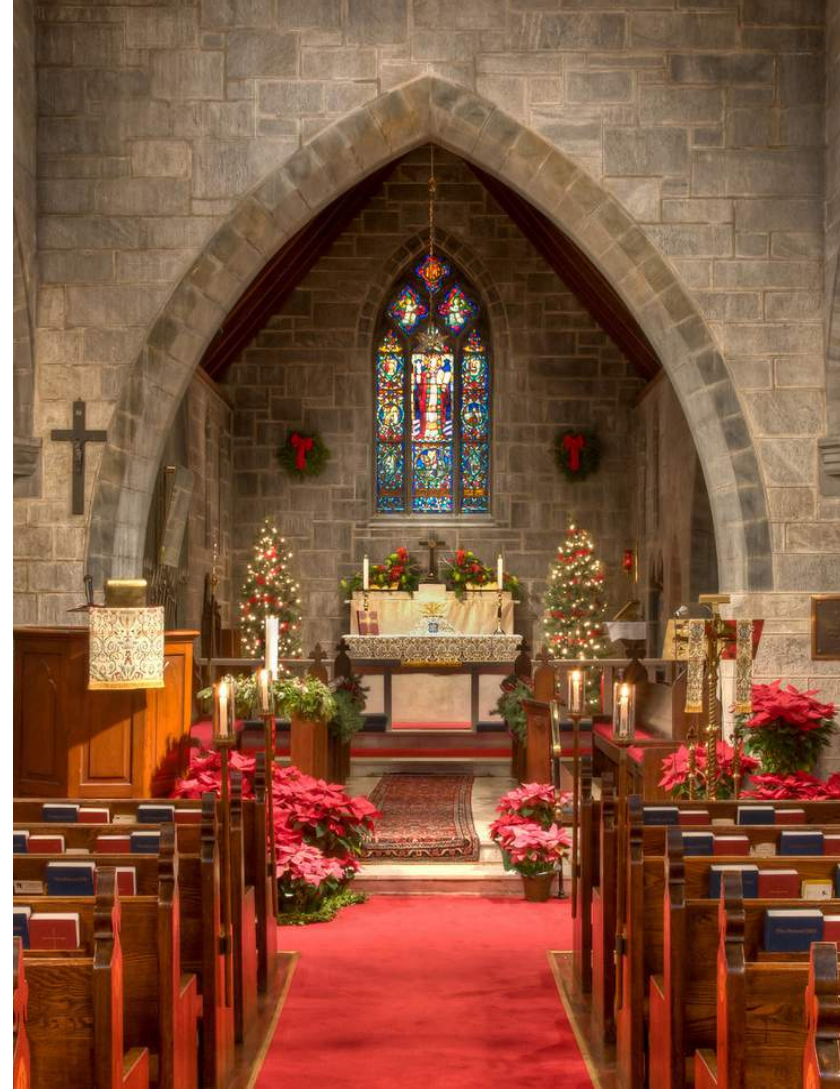
During the 15 years following the independent status of Christ Church Ithan the vestry dealt with many challenges, including the construction of a rectory, the expansion of the parish hall by adding two wings to accommodate the 180 Sunday School students, and creating a set of scenarios that included demolishing Chandler’s chapel and replacing it with a 400 seat capacity modern church. An ongoing and very vexing problem was the presence of pigeons in the belfry, creating a noisy and unhygienic situation. After many attempts to deter them from the bell tower the vestry in 1973 resolved to spend up to \$5,000 (in today’s dollars) to fight the pigeons. However, one of the first lady members of the vestry informed the group gathered that she had read that pigeons were terrified of snakes. She put this theory into action by purchasing 10 toy snakes at Woolworth’s in Wayne. She then called on her good friend and the fire chief of the Radnor Fire Department and suggested that they might want to have a “drill” with the hook and ladder and a couple of volunteers to place the “snakes” in the bell tower. The mission was accomplished and nary a pigeon has been seen in the belfry since.



THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

The first stained glass windows were those behind the altar and on the sides of the chancel. These were crafted in England and designed to portray St. Martin and various features of his life. They were donated by Theophilus Chandler’s wife shortly after his death as a memorial to this great man who created this special little, work of art church that was his gift to God. It is also the newest window, because in 2007 St. Martin was replaced by a radiant picture of Christ as a memorial to a long time parishioner, Edwin Charles Gallagher. A stained glass window was placed at the opposite end of the church in 1962 as a memorial to the Rev. Elob Johnson, first rector of the independent parish - Christ Church Ithan. The stained glass windows placed on the north and south sides of the church are unique in many ways. They are all designed by the renowned Willet Studios and arranged in sequential order to portray the events in Jesus’ life from the Annunciation to Ascension. This depiction of the life of Christ in stained glass windows goes back to the medieval cathedrals of Europe to educate the congregation at a time before books existed. Another interesting enigma is the fact that even though the windows are in chronologic order of the life of Christ, they were not donated and installed in that same type of sequence.





CHRISTMAS

AT CHRIST CHURCH ITHAN



Theophilus Parsons Chandler, Jr.

A lovely area in Radnor Township, located in the Philadelphia suburbs, was once known as Ithan Farm and today is known as Christ Church Ithan. The property holds a spiritual, quiet, simple calm. Theophilus P. Chandler, Jr. built his part of the world there, and created something that lives today in peace, refuge, hope and outreach to the community.

Who was Theophilus Parsons Chandler, Jr. and what do we know about his legacy, including the one that lives today as Christ Church Ithan?

Mr. Chandler is known widely as one of the most important architects in the Philadelphia region, having organized the University of Pennsylvania's Architecture Department. He is said to have "basically shaped the architectural climate of Philadelphia." He hailed, from Brookline, Massachusetts, having been born there September 7, 1845. Chandler showed a lifelong interest in drawing and in nature, which he often brought together in his designs. Education began with a first year at Harvard, and then on to Paris at the atelier of Joseph Auguste Emile Vaudremer. The English and European influences evidenced



themselves in his work, which would contribute to his success as a "society architect" as the American upper classes were interested in these types of design. His marriage to Sophie Madeleine DuPont further added to his "society connections" as some of his earlier commissions were for the DuPont's Estate, Winterthur. These included renovations to the house, now a museum, and creating Winterthur's train station. Additionally, an early commission to Christ Church Christiana Hundred, where many DuPonts worshipped in Delaware, created a strong foundation for his later work in ecclesiastical settings.

Additional work on the development of Ridley Park for the Philadelphia and Baltimore Railroad as well as marriage brought TPC South from Boston to Philadelphia. Both brought connections for years to come.

To his design credit are 124 buildings: churches, private homes, public buildings, train stations, bridges, as well as printed art, furniture and elements of design. Many are described in detail in Joan Church Roberts' Theophilus P. Chandler, Jr. Portrait of An American Architect.

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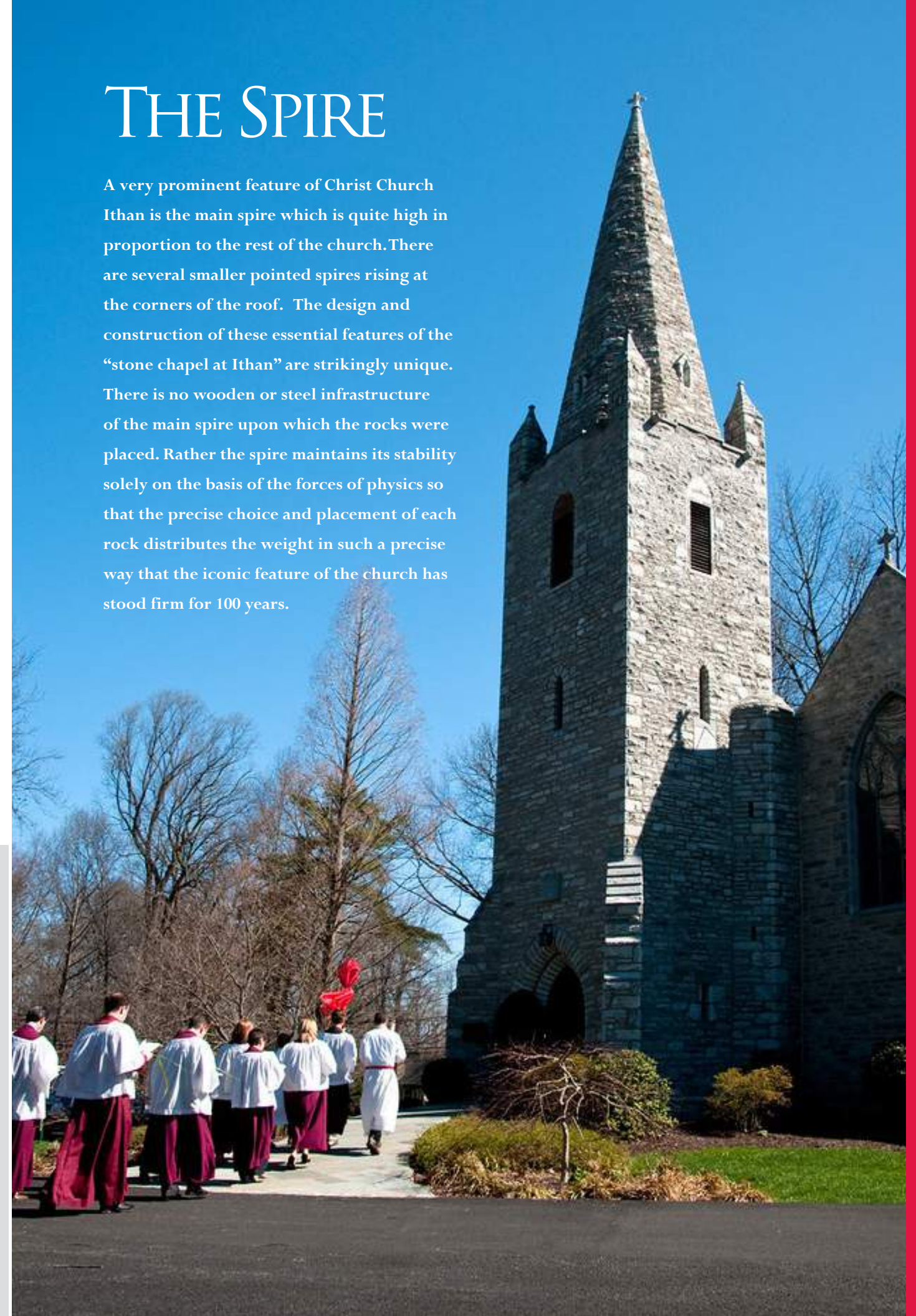
THE GIFT OF A CHURCH

Theophilus Chandler was advised that it would be necessary under canonical law to first deed the chapel to the Diocese, which in turn would arrange for it to come under the jurisdiction of St. Martin's Church. However, from the vestry minutes of St. Martin's it would appear that they were first informed of Mr. Chandler's generous gift of a beautiful stone gothic chapel at the vestry meeting of September 22, 1919. After some discussion, it was agreed by unanimous vote at the next vestry meeting to accept his "stone chapel at Ithan" under certain conditions. The stipulations were that the Chandlers provide \$300, the annual supply of coal, and that the maintenance of the chapel be "remembered" in their will. The latter was done at the time of Theophilus Chandler's death in 1928 by his wife Sophie DuPont Chandler when she created an endowment of \$50,000 in support of her husband's special gift to God and the people who worshiped there. A difficult to see inscription on the wall just inside the main entrance of the church reads:

*To the Glory of God
This Chapel of St. Martin's was
Built and the Land Given
by
Theophilus Parsons Chandler, Architect
And his Wife
Sophie Madeline duPont Chandler*

THE SPIRE

A very prominent feature of Christ Church Ithan is the main spire which is quite high in proportion to the rest of the church. There are several smaller pointed spires rising at the corners of the roof. The design and construction of these essential features of the "stone chapel at Ithan" are strikingly unique. There is no wooden or steel infrastructure of the main spire upon which the rocks were placed. Rather the spire maintains its stability solely on the basis of the forces of physics so that the precise choice and placement of each rock distributes the weight in such a precise way that the iconic feature of the church has stood firm for 100 years.



Theophilus Parsons Chandler, Jr.

Sadly, a great many of TPC's works no longer exist: they burned, were torn down, fell into disrepair, or were replaced by newer conceptual versions (as is the case with his zoo buildings). But his final work lives on in its simple beauty: Christ Church Ithan, built from 1916-1919.

Chandler's memberships included:

- Society of the Mayflower Descendants
- School Affiliations: University of Pennsylvania, Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art

Chandler's work on the National Register of Historic Places:

- Stone arch bridge on Goshen Road over Darby Creek to Darby Paoli Road, 1905
- Bishop Mackay-Smith House also known as the Franklin School in Rittenhouse
- "Stirling" mansion in Reading, PA for industrialist James Hervey Sternbergh

TPC and Sophie did not have children of their own, and it is felt that parental guidance and care took the form of mentoring many architects of the next generation. Included in these "Chandlerians" were William L Baily, George Bassett, Walter Cope, Will

Decker, John Dull, Clarence Gardener, T. Mitchell Hastings, Edward Hazelhurst, Louis Hickman, Charles Barton Keen, Albert Kelsey, Charles Klauder, Arthur Meigs, Walter Mellor, Arnold Moses, George Page, John Stewardson.

Of different importance is Chandler's last architectural student, Henry Hermanns; not in his own stature as an architect, a role from which he took a long hiatus, but in his involvement in creating Christ Church Ithan and in his relationship with TPC. He met Chandler in 1917 and came to work for him on Ithan Farm, living on site along with his wife. Hermanns worked on the creation of Christ Church, and also was supportive of the aging Chandler whose eyesight was failing. He said, "(Chandler) made the church as plain as he could—a simple old English Gothic church," because if it was "too elaborate he would be criticized by some of his wealthy neighbors as a show-off." Hermanns himself claims to have designed the pulpit and chairs.

Chandler's work could often include elegant Gothic and classical elements while incorporating the natural world. His own home at Ithan Farm was both an elegant and rustic stone edifice, and a great deal of care was taken of the outdoors: vegetable gardens, intentionally laid out plans for trees, an area for cranberries and

a corn crib. The property also held his studio, stables, yard, a poultry house, and a rental/guest house. The plans for this 48 acre farm were dated 1890. Later, by 1931 the property was subdivided. By the 1970s a new owner removed the third story and gables. Though the studio fared well over time, only the footprint of the original house remains. The stable complex and barn were both reinvented as houses. The Chandlers were to enjoy Ithan Farm as home for around 40 years. Sophie survived her husband who passed away at nearly 83 on August 16, 1928. In her own will, she created two architecture fellowships at Penn in his name.

What does live on at the former Ithan Farm is the church Chandler built there, his final work. It was a gift to the Episcopal diocese and was built entirely to his own personal specifications and ecclesiological vision. One cannot know the exact talk of the day, but it is said to include issues such as why a man would build a church on his own property—was this effort ostentatious or holy? And even if only the most humble of intentions indeed were at play, how would yet another church fit into the community of the day? After all, St. Martin's, Radnor was already serving the local community at a wooden chapel at the intersection of Radnor Chester Road and Conestoga Road. Chandler's gift to God was accepted by St. Martin's Church and consecrated on All Saints Day 1919. It became known as the "Stone Chapel at Ithan"

Over the ensuing years the congregation grew and in June 1958 it became an independent parish known as Christ Church Ithan.

The church building of Christ Church Ithan is simple in its elegance as noted by Hermanns. The ornamentation that characterized much of Chandler's early work is absent. Though simple, many details took much consideration, as is said to be the case with the thin lancet window high above the chancel. Its particular shade of red was of importance to TPC according to Hermanns. Interior walls are random-laid, smooth, light gray ashlar stone. Much stone was quarried in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania and cut precisely according to the drawings of Mr. Chandler on large sheets of paper. The richness of the marble columns used is in contrast to the otherwise lack of ornamentation.

Sophie bequeathed an endowment of around \$50,000 for the upkeep of the church building. That bequest has grown over the years since and has supported the upkeep of the church building. What began as a simply designed gift and spiritual expression has its own life today. And the man, who from a young age, demonstrated a skill of drawing and love of nature, left a lasting legacy of a comforting, spiritual home where one is close to God.

- Amy Harper

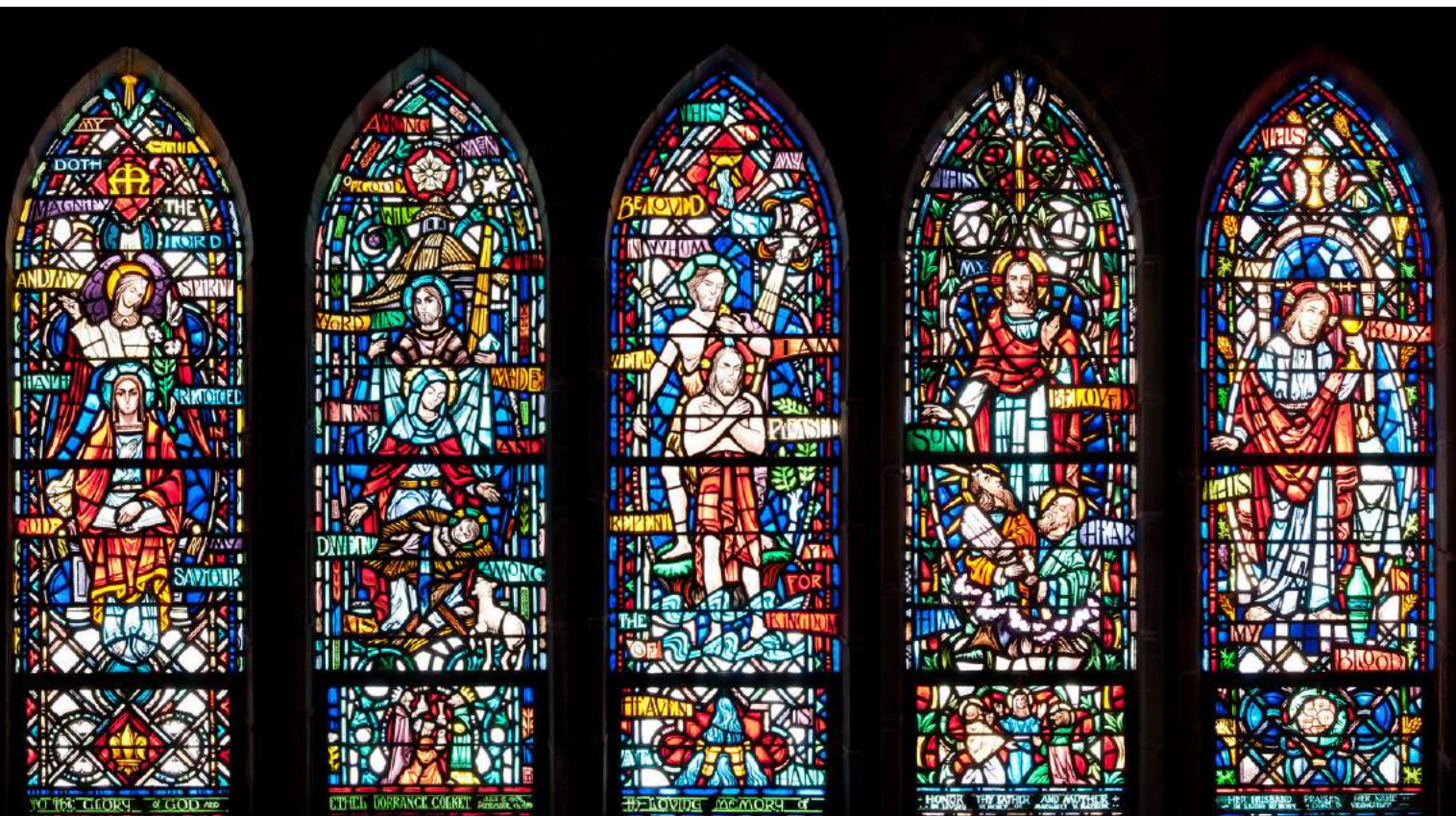


Send therefore your blessing upon these your servants, that they may so love, honor, and cherish each other in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, that their home may be a haven of blessing and peace.

- from The Book of Common Prayer, a portion of "The Blessing of the Marriage"



THE STAINED GLASS



Stained glass windows have for centuries been synonymous with the ethereal beauty of churches and the windows of Christ Church Ithan are no exception. The most important reason that stained glass windows remain a staple in churches, even now, goes back to Biblical times. Stained glass was not merely attractive, it created a heavenly experience with a material object - glass - making the earthly into the divine. More importantly, stained glass was useful for a practical reason. In the Medieval Period, many church goers were illiterate. The intricate scenes depicted in stained glass were not just decorations, they were the means of delivering religious messages to all viewers, even those who could not read the Bible for themselves. Stained glass embedded religious beliefs into the very walls.

The tradition of making stained glass windows goes back a long way. As early as the 4th century colored glass was used to ornament church windows, though it was not until the 12th century that making stained glass became an art form like sculpture or painting. With the advent of the Gothic period of architecture and the wide space dedicated to windows there was a greater demand for stained glass windows.

The making of a stained glass window has changed little in a thousand years, and the materials and tools are for the most part developments of those used by medieval glaziers. Early windows were formed from pieces of glass blown by artists into varying forms and sizes. Pieces were then cut into smaller fragments and assembled according to a design.

More recently, the initial design is usually executed in watercolor since its transparency is most suited to depicting the translucence of glass. A cartoon is then drawn from the basic designs to the exact dimensions of the commissioned window. A tracing is taken of the cartoon to act as a pattern or outline for the glass cutter.

Modern glass cutters use a tool with a hard metal wheel to accurately incise the glass. The cut sections of glass are temporarily

mounted onto a sheet of glass with wax or plasticine. Paint is applied to the glass with a broad-bristled brush used exclusively for shading or "matting". A finer brush is used to detail areas such as a face or hands of a figure. This process is known as "line" work.

After firing, the pieces of glass are framed with lead strips called "comes". A cement mixture is forced under the comes with a stiff brush to seal the panels of glass. Light also is an important component as it hits the window and is moderated by the colors and designs.

During the early years of Christ Church Ithan the only stained glass windows were found in the Chancel - the part of the church containing the altar and seats for the clergy and choir, and the Sacristy - the area in the church where sacred vessels and vestments are kept and where the clergy vests.

The window over the Altar depicting St. Martin was the gift of Sophie Madeleine DuPont Chandler and was donated in memory of her husband, Theophilus, upon his death. No record of its design, or that of the four small Chancel windows which bear the initial SMduPC at their base, is known. These windows, referred to as the Chandler Windows, illustrate the story of St. Martin. On the left or Gospel side is St. Martin breaking down heathen altars and St. Martin waited upon by the Empress. On the right or Epistle side St. Martin is depicted building the monastery at Montmartier and the burial of St. Martin. In the Sacristy one window shows the words of the Commendation for the dying found in the prayer book on page 319, "Depart, O Christian sail...", and on the other the words "May the souls of the faithful...". Over the door exiting the Sacristy is a window with the inscription "Ascendat Oratio Descendat Gratia". These windows were executed in London following Mrs. Chandler's death in January of 1931 and dedicated on Sunday, June 26, 1932 by the Rt. Rev. Francis Marion Taitt, S.T.D., Bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

(continued on pg. 22)

THE CORNERSTONE

One of several large parcels of land in the Ithan area was the "Ithan Farm" that was owned by Theophilus Chandler and his wife Sophie DuPont Chandler. It was upon this land that extended from Newtown Road to Conestoga Road that this preeminent Philadelphia architect of his time decided to design and build a simple gothic style, country church. This plan was first proposed to the Diocese on November 8, 1916 when Mr. Chandler met with the secretary of the Commission of Church Buildings, to discuss his plan for a chapel that would be donated to St. Martin's Parish. The Diocese official then communicated to the Bishop that "The work is so advanced that he (Mr. Chandler) tells me he has asked that you will arrange for the laying of the cornerstone", which took place the next month.



In a letter dated 2/27/31 to Mrs. William Willet, wife of the owner of Willet Stained Glass Studios in Philadelphia, the Rev. Richard Gurley, rector of St. Martin's Church, explained that the commission for the Chandler Windows could not go to the Willet Studio because "the contract for the Chandler Window was given in the will and was awarded to any one of three firms in England, which firms were mentioned by name". Sophie DuPont Chandler left \$8,000.00 in her will for the window. In 2007 the central figure of St. Martin was replaced by the figure of Christ. This new section was given in memory of Edwin Gallagher by his children, Anne, Robert, Susan and Jane. A banner on the right side bears the inscription.

In the back of the church, a vestibule leading to the nave of the church, the Narthex window is a memorial to J. Kent Willing, Jr. and his wife Margaret Ansbach Willing, who were lost at sea during a storm off Bermuda in 1955. This window depicts Christ walking upon the waters of a lake toward a boat that holds some of his disciples and is being buffeted by a severe storm. Aware of their fear, Jesus calls out "It is I; Be Not Afraid". In the small

medallion, St. Christopher, the patron saint of travelers, holds the Christ child. This window and the rest of the windows were designed and executed by the Willet Stained Glass Studio, one of the premier stained glass studios in the United States, and who created and executed the rest of the church windows

The large west window was done in 1963 and measures 12' 10" x 5' 4". This window is described as a four-lancet window, a lancet window being a high narrow window with an acutely pointed arch. Referred to as the Johnson Memorial, it is an illustrated history of the Church and the Anglican Communion in particular. The seal of the latter appears in the tracery (a decorative interlacing of lines). It is dedicated to the Glory of God and in loving memory of the Rev. Elov Frit iof Johnson, July 21, 1919 - September 16, 1962. He was the first minister in this church and died at the altar. The window was donated by his wife.

Across the center of the window are four figures. The first is St. Paul, the great missionary who, according to legend, traveled as far as England with news of the new religion. He holds an open book

and the "sword of the spirit." Next is St. Joseph of Arimathea who buried the body of Jesus in his new tomb. He is believed to have brought the Holy Grail to England. He holds a flowering staff, the Glastonbury thorn. Next is St. Alban, the Roman soldier who was the first Christian martyr in Britain. The fourth figure is St. Augustine, who was sent by St. Gregory the Great to England to find that Queen Bertha was a Christian. Her husband, King Ethelburt, was baptized and gave the land upon which Canterbury Cathedral now stands.

Continuing across the top of the lancets is St. David of Wales, who was famed as an orator. Once when he was speaking a white dove lighted on his shoulder. This is said to explain the trumpets. St. Columbia is shown sailing to Iona in a small boat to found the famous monastery. Next is St. Thomas of Becket who was killed at the altar of Canterbury Cathedral. John Wycliffe and Thomas Cranmer represent the Reformation Period. Wycliffe began the translation of the Bible into English and Cranmer began the Prayer Book.

Across the bottom is a depiction of the Anglican Communion in America. The

center two lancets show Master Fletcher, chaplain to Sir Francis Drake, who held a Prayer Book service in California in 1579. [??] To the left is the Rt. Rev. William White (1787-1856), first bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. To the right is the Rt. Rev. Samuel Seabury of Connecticut, first bishop of the new United States, who had to go to Aberdeen, Scotland to be ordained. The background of the window is a flowing leaf and branch pattern that seems to echo that of the Great Commission window found on the right aisle or Epistle side.

The outer aisles on either side of the interior of the church, feature windows that were the work of Kenneth Crocker of Willet Studio. Each window measures 6' 5" H x 2' W. These windows illustrate key chronological events in the life of Christ beginning at the rear of the Gospel side moving toward the Chancel, crossing to the Epistle side and progressing toward the rear. The first window on the Gospel side, the Annunciation, executed in 1967, shows the Angel Gabriel standing behind Mary, holding a lily. Above is Mary's monogram below a fleur-de-lys, symbol of her purity. The inscription reads:

"To the Glory of God and/My son Doth

Magnify the Lord And My Spirit Hath Rejoiced in God My Savior"

The next window (1967) depicts the Nativity. The Holy Family are gathered in the stable under the rays of the Star. Three wise men are in the ventilator section at the bottom of the window. The symbol at the top is the Christmas rose. The inscription reads:

"Among Men of Good Will The Word Was Made Flesh and Dwelt Among Us."

This window is inscribed to Ethel Dorrance Colket (July 17, 1909 - Sept. 13, 1965)

The Baptism is the subject of the third window. Here the Holy Spirit appears in the form of a dove as John baptizes Jesus. The scallop shell is the symbol at the top. In the ventilator is a font with flowing water. The inscription reads:

"This is My Beloved Son In Whom I Am Well Pleased. Repent Ye For the Kingdom of Heaven Is At Hand"

These first three windows are inscribed to Ethel Dorrance Colket (July 17, 1909



Stained glass window of St. Martin - now in chapel in parish house

- Sept. 13, 1965). Her husband served as one of the founding vestryman when Christ Church became an independent parish in June 1958.

(continued on pg. 26)

HISTORY OF ITHAN VILLAGE

When St. Martin's Church in Radnor saw the need for a mission nearer to the farmlands toward its south it built a wooden chapel near the corner of Conestoga Road and Radnor Chester Road in the small, but busy little town of Ithan. The name "Ithan" has all but disappeared into folklore as it vanished from official maps sometime after 1948, but its legendary community and distinctive wood frame houses are still very much in evidence as a standalone piece of American history.

The whole area had been occupied by Lenape Indians, but was settled predominantly by Quakers from Radnorshire, Wales, around 1663, who purchased the 40,000 acres that became known as the "Welsh Tract". The area was connected to colonial Philadelphia by the Conestoga Road. This "highway" originally followed an old Indian trail extending from the Delaware River and initially terminating at the Radnor Meeting House in Ithan. The road was later extended along the trail to the Susquehanna River, but remained a dirt road into the 1900's



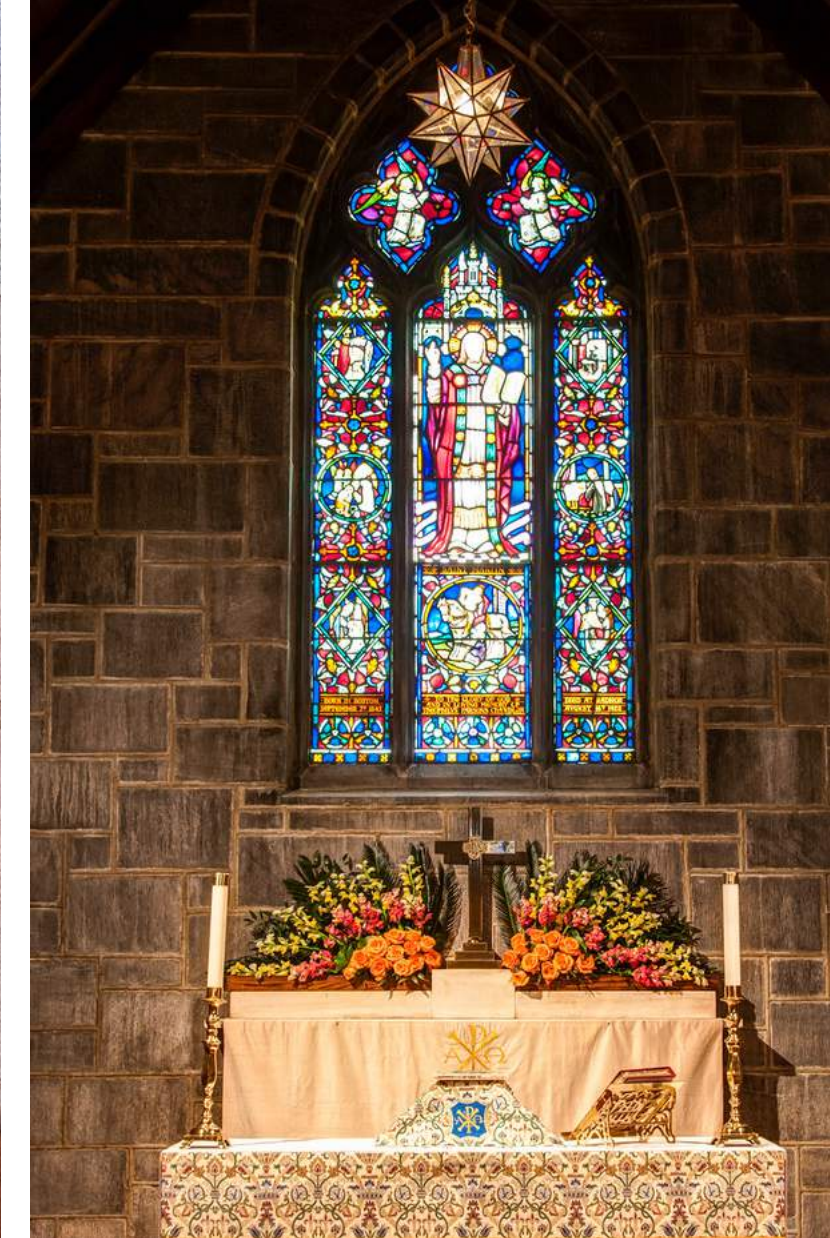
Conestoga Road looking west toward Christ Church Ithan

In the middle part of the 19th century, after Native Americans had mostly disappeared from the Pennsylvania scene, but cars, telephone and electricity had not yet appeared, a great part of Ithan belonged to the J. Hunter Ewing estate. The small but bustling town of Ithan was a group of shops and buildings surrounded by huge farms and estates. On Conestoga Road in Ithan is the Radnor Quaker Meeting, still an historic landmark today. Near the Ithan General Store were the saddler's, the wheelwright's and the blacksmith's shops. Also nearby were a pottery plant and Joseph Worrell's grist mill.

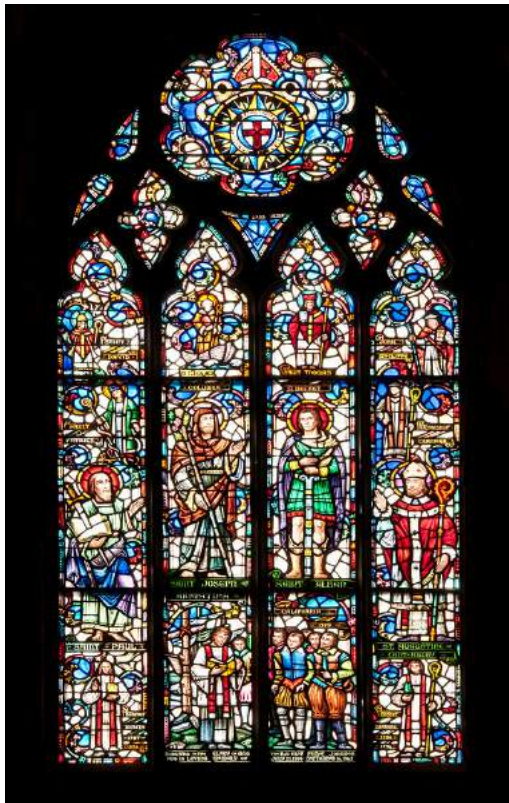
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Blacksmith's Shop - now a gas station

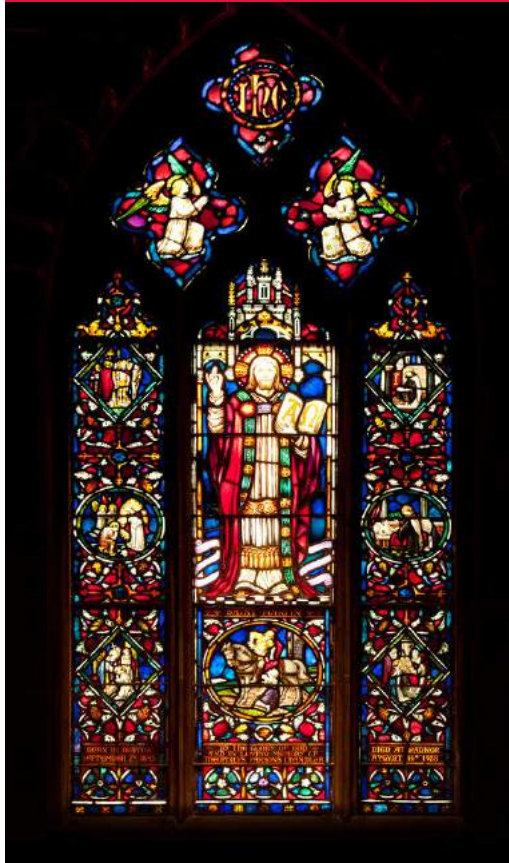


EASTER
AT CHRIST
CHURCH ITHAN



*“You’re here to be light,
bringing out the God
colors in the world”*

Matthew 5:14 The Message



The next two windows are those of the Transfiguration and the Last Supper, the gifts of Charles R. Vidinghoff in living memory, respectively of his Mother, Margaret V. Raynor and his wife, Doris D. Vidinghoff. A letter in the Willet archives indicates that Mr. Vidinghoff stressed the word “living” in the inscriptions as his mother and his wife were both alive in 1968 at the time the windows were commissioned.

The Transfiguration window shows Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, flanked by Moses holding The Tablets of the Law, and by Elijah with a scroll. The Holy Spirit dove is at the apex of the window. The three small figures at the bottom are Peter, James and John who witnessed the scene from below. The inscription reads:

“This Is My Beloved Son. Hear Him”

At the bottom is written “Honor Thy Father and Mother.” In loving memory of Margaret Raynor.

The next window tells the story of The Last Supper by a single figure of Jesus holding the Chalice. The symbol at the top is a Chalice and Host. At the bottom are the five loaves of bread and two fish, the boy’s lunch which Jesus multiplied to feed five thousand people. The inscription reads:

“This Is My Body. This Is My Blood”

At the bottom is “Her Husband Praises Her Name” in loving memory of Doris D. Vidinghoff.

The first window on the Epistle side of the church, which was executed in 1961, depicts the Crucifixion. Jesus hangs on the cross. The inscription reads:

“Agnus Dei/INRI Lamb of God Who Takest Away the Sins of the World”

The Resurrection Window (1961) depicts the Resurrection of Christ as told by an angel to the women at the

tomb. Above is the butterfly symbolizing universal life after death. The caterpillar represents life on earth. The seeming death in the cocoon is the grave. Afterwards the butterfly emerges to fly on bright wings to heaven. The phoenix at the bottom is a mythological bird the ancients thought instead of dying, set fire to her nest and rose rejuvenated from the flames - a universal resurrection symbol. The inscription reads:

“Now Is Christ Risen From the Dead and Become The First Fruits of Them That Slept”

The next window is the Ascension Window. Here Christ the King leaves the earth and ascends to Heaven to reign, surrounded by angels and stars. The musical instruments and the censor at the bottom symbolize prayer and praise. The inscription on the window reads:

“That Where He Is Thither We Might Also Ascend And Reign With Him In Glory”

This window was done in 1962 and bears the dedication:

To the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of Stanley Malcolm Cameron 1898-1960

The final window on the Epistle side is entitled The Great Commission and is dated 1961. This window is replete with symbolism. Christ stands at its center superimposed on a grape vine. “I Am the Vine, Ye Are the Branches”. At the base is Chi Rho (XP), the sacred monogram for Jesus Christ. On the branches of the vine in circular medallions are the symbols of the Apostles. Peter has crossed keys, the keys to Heaven entrusted to him by Jesus. James the Greater has three scallop shells, the symbol of pilgrimage. John has a chalice from which emerges a serpent. This refers to an attempt on his life by his enemies who poisoned the communion wine from which he miraculously escaped. Andrew was

martyred on an x-shaped cross. Philip has a tall cross and loaves of bread symbolic of his presence at the feeding of the five thousand. Bartholomew was flayed alive so his symbol combines a knife with an open Bible. Thomas built a church in India with his own hands and was afterward martyred there, so his symbol is a spear and a carpenter’s square. To James the Less is given a saw, an instrument of his martyrdom. Three purses recall Matthew’s original calling of tax collector. A ship is assigned to Jude because of his missionary journeys. Simon was a fisher of men by power of the Gospel, so his symbol combines a fish and a book. Matthias stands in place of Judas.

He was beheaded after missionary work in Judea. His symbol combines an axe and a book.

The inscription, “Go Ye and Teach All Nations Baptizing Them In the Name of the Father The Son The Holy Ghost” is the Great Commission Jesus gave to his Apostles, to go into the world to preach the Gospel and baptize. This command, sending out so few, grew into a strong Church. The rites of the Church are the Seven Sacraments, symbolized in the window closer to the figure of Christ. Above Him are the font of Baptism, the chalice and host of Communion, and two doves approaching

the Chalice - a symbol for confirmation. Near the bottom of the window are a stole and book for Holy Orders and an olive branch and an oil stock for Holy Unction. Below these are entwined lamps and rings surmounted by a cross for Marriage and crossed keys and scourges for Penance. At the window’s apex is the Holy Spirit dove.

What beauty and majesty these windows bring to this little church. They are a living testament to the stories they tell and to those they memorialize.

- Daille Sharpless

HISTORY OF ITHAN VILLAGE

One of Radnor Township’s quaint landmarks was the old Ithan Store which still stands as a white building at the intersection of Conestoga and Radnor-Chester Roads. Old records show that the first male child born in Radnor Township was a son of John Jarman who purchased this property in 1688 from Richards Daves. In 1769 Jarman died in this same house at the age of 85.

When the Ithan post office came into existence it was located in the Ithan General



Ithan General Store

Store. Tom Harkins became the first mail carrier. For nearly fifty years he was also sexton of St. Martin’s chapel which existed just off the corner of Conestoga and Radnor-Chester Roads. He first assumed these duties when the chapel was organized near the school house in 1893.

Owners during the 1950s were Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Curley, who took over management of the store in 1945 for a “cooperative” formed by a number of Ithan residents when the store and post office located in this building seemed doomed in 1937. This group was eager to save not only the little store but also the post office. Just east of the village center was the Sorrel Horse Inn. Local historians tell us Agnes Irwin School property at the corner of Conestoga Road and S. Ithan Avenue was the site of first Sorrel Horse Tavern. However, a more recent Sorrel Horse Tavern is known to have existed on the north side of Conestoga Road, half a mile west of the church property and just east of the juncture with Sproul Road. This



Sorrel Horse Inn and Hotel 1910 - One of the many inns along Conestoga Road near Ithan Village

property appears on late nineteenth century maps titled as Sorrel Horse Tavern and Sorrel Horse Hotel. A rock quarry with a stone-crusher shed was located behind it. The quarry and inn have been demolished and replaced by homes. The Sorrel Horse Inn was one of several taverns and inns along Conestoga (or Old Lancaster) Road, as the road was well traveled by Conestoga wagons and other travelers going westward from Philadelphia.

BANJOTOWN

Banjotown is a 12-acre section of the initial land grant made to Richard Davies in 1681 when he bought 5,000 acres from William Penn, who had been granted the land by Charles II of England. Radnor Township was founded a year later.

Title to the land changed hands several times over the years. In 1864 Sarah Jane Matlack was allocated 56 acres including the present land of Banjotown. These 56 acres extended from the present west boundary of Banjotown across the intersection of Newtown Road and Conestoga Road where the covered wagons trailed between Philadelphia and Lancaster. This parcel included the land on which the historical Meigs Estate was subsequently built and backs directly onto what is now Harrison Road and Parkes Run Lane. Around 1881 a 12-acre plot was subdivided. 10 acres on the west were split into 36 lots by Mrs. Matlack. It was arranged in three rows of 12 lots running roughly north/south. Twelve of the lots faced onto Newtown Road while the remaining 24 bordered the dead-end track which was to become Matlack Lane.

A very similar sized parcel split existed a short distance east on land owned by noted



Typical Banjotown House built in 1880's

architect and housing developer Theophilus P. Chandler who owned land all around and within Banjotown.

Construction of homes in Banjotown began in the late 1880s and continued into the early part of the 20th century. The original eight houses were built of wood frame on a field stone base, covered with a hard white pinewood siding. Most had two

rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs, each room heated by a wood stove. There was no running water, and a privy was out back.

Around 1910 Colonel Robert Leaming Montgomery, founder of Janney Montgomery Scott, purchased land at the far southwest corner of Newtown Road and Darby Paoli Road. He is said to have been fox hunting in the area and when he fell off his horse decided it was the perfect spot to put down roots. In 1911 he completed the construction of the large 50-room Horace Trumbauer designed mansion "Ardrossan". By 1940 it had become the inspiration for Philip Barry's Broadway play and subsequent film, "The Philadelphia Story". The story was later adapted for the Hollywood musical production "High Society". As lifelong friends of the Scott family Barry is said to have based his story on the Colonel's daughter, Hope Montgomery Scott, portrayed by Katherine Hepburn in "The Philadelphia Story" and Philadelphia's own Grace Kelly in "High Society".

If one can visualize Banjotown at that time

as a mixed community with ducks, pigs and chickens running around, and tin cans and bottles dumped in the backyard to fill the creek, it is no wonder that Mr. Montgomery thought that Banjotown might become a shanty town. The estate owners were not about to spend large amounts of money building big mansions only to have to drive by this shabby area in order to get to their front gates. So they conspired together to purchase the whole of Banjotown in order to improve its appearance.

During the 1920s Montgomery fixed up the dwellings and used the community to house the employees of Ardrossan Estate and Farms. A stone duplex tenant house was built near the center of Banjotown. This house was built identical to another tenant house he constructed further west on Newtown Road, the original part of his estate. Both structures stand to this day. There apparently was another motive for the construction work. The Prohibition Act hit the social classes hard between 1920 and 1933. Montgomery set up his very own speakeasy, complete with full bar, in the vast upstairs room of the barn at 29 Matlack Lane. It is not known for sure who its patrons were, but word has it that it was Montgomery and his pals rather than native Banjotowners. The bar remained in situ until 2012 when the entire property was largely emptied for its sale. As the

last unmodernized house in Banjotown it stands as a historic reminder of the way things were, and the bar room is still a magnificent wood paneled space.

How Banjotown got its name is a matter of much speculation. In the early days some called it Banjo Alley or Banjo Row. As far as can be determined it had been known as Banjotown even before 1900. Early inhabitants reported that several of the black residents did have banjos and would frequently get together in the evenings to sing and dance. From this group's music the name apparently arose.

Banjotown during the 1930s and 1940s was a remarkably close-knit community. The strong group spirit gave rise to many interesting activities over the years such as Banjotown Night Club on warm summer evenings and children's plays and art shows. In the late 1950s block parties were held by the families in residence. The cul-de-sac of Matlack Lane was closed off and decorated in a circus-like atmosphere. The wives joined together to bake and cook for some 250 guests who danced on the street as the band played through to the early hours of the morning.

- Nancy Breitting

HISTORY THAT IS LIVING

The area neighboring today's Christ Church Ithan is alive with history. The Ithan General Store which still stands on the corner of Conestoga Road and Radnor Chester road was opened in the last quarter of the 17th century. The house on the opposite corner was built in 1752. Across the street from it is the Radnor Friends Meeting house whose current structure was built in 1721. The house at 634 Conestoga Road was built in 1722 and was occupied by longstanding parishioners of Christ Church. Many of the houses existing today along Conestoga Road and Newtown Road were built in the 1800's and early 1900's. A sad irony is that a rare few of the many buildings that Theophilus Chandler designed still stand today, including his own estate home. However, Christ Church Ithan remains exactly like it was the day that Mr. Chandler finished it in 1919.



Plot plan of Banjotown in late 1800's

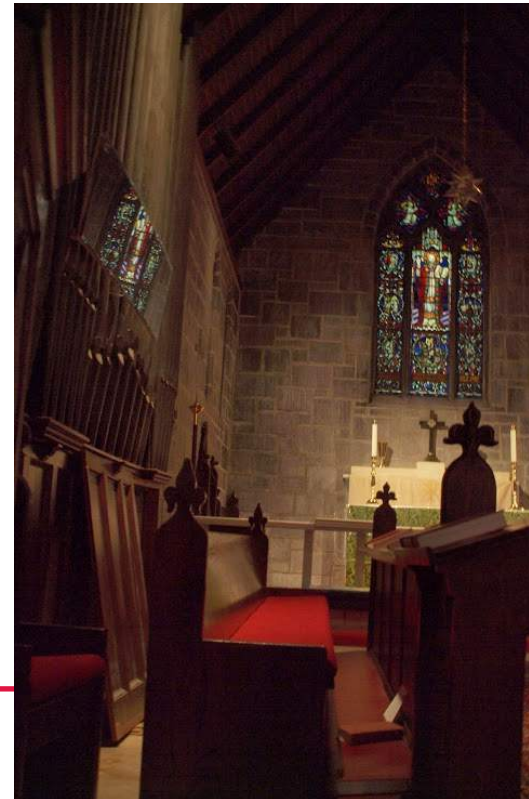


Speakeasy behind Banjotown house



AUTUMN
AT CHRIST
CHURCH ITHAN





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Editorial Contributors

Nancy Breitling James Krühly, FAIA George Peckham, MD
Amy Harper Charles Maddock Daille Sharpless

Special Appreciation to:

Rev. Ronald Parker – rector 1992-2009
Rev. Kevin Moroney – rector 2009 - 2015
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Dr. Katherine Woodhouse-Beyer – archivist

Photography

Martin McNeil

Creative Graphic Design

Tina Lambdin

Volunteers

Ann Ainsworth	Noel Farley	Jacqui North
Jon Baker	Gordon French	Jo Parker
Sally Borghesani	Julia Gould	Sue Philipp
Rick Wheeler	Porter Gould	Mary Prince
Anne Churchman	Brenda Hackett	Chris Soutendijk
Peter Clauss	Bruce Wietlisbach	Dode Tague
Lori Dugan	Lunetta Headley	Barry Tague
Judy Englerth	Chris Herring	Heyward Wharton

St. Martin’s Church – Radnor, PA

Joan Church Roberts’ Theophilus P. Chandler, Jr.
Portrait Of An American

Main Line Media News 9/29/13

Radnor Historical Society website “Your Town
and My Town” 11/3/1950, and Banjotown

American Architects and Buildings Project c. 2006
Biography Chandler and St. Martin’s Chapel

Theophilus Parsons, Jr (1845-1928), Architect

Thomas F. Rzeznik’s CHURCH AND ESTATE,
Religion and Wealth in Industrial-Era.

Athenaeum of Philadelphia



CHRIST CHURCH ITHAN

536 Conestoga Rd,
Villanova, PA 19085

610.688.1110

www.christchurchithan.org