

Interview with the Reverend Judith Sullivan by William Cutler,  
Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania Oral History Project, Philadelphia,  
Pennsylvania, February 8, 2018.

JUDITH SULLIVAN: Good morning.

WILLIAM CUTLER: Nice to see you today, on this crazy day, with the excitement and the parade.

JS: [Laughs] It certainly is an historic one, right.

WC: That must make the day appropriate for doing an oral history interview. I'd like to start by just asking you to give me some personal background, a little bit about yourself, where you were born, and when you were born, something about your family.

JS: Sure. I was born and raised in Connecticut. I was born in New Haven, Connecticut, which is where both sides of my family were from. I grew up outside of Danbury, Connecticut, and am the eldest of five children. My siblings are now scattered all around the Northeast, I would say.

I came to Philadelphia after I graduated from college, so I have lived all of my adult life, I like to say, in the city of Philadelphia, which has been a wonderful thing. I married here, raised my children here with my late husband, and really consider myself to be a Philadelphian after all these years. Especially on this day, as we celebrate the victory of the Eagles, I deeply identify myself as a Philadelphian.

WC: Well, you and I have that in common. I wasn't born here, but I came here when I got out of graduate school.

JS: Aha!

WC: And I've lived here ever since. Why did you come to Philadelphia?

JS: Well, I graduated from Wellesley College, and I wanted to work in publishing. And I found, it was sort of a dry time in publishing, that publishing—

WC: When was this?

JS: 1978.

WC: 1978.

JS: Yes, there was a kind of a general business decline, recession. The publishing industry itself was in a state of transition. And we had here in Philadelphia, Lippincott, which had just been purchased by Harper and Row. We had the Athenaeum Press. We had Saunders and other medical publishers. And there were frankly not a lot of jobs anywhere in publishing. And I found one, ironically, at an organization called the Institute for Scientific Information, ISI, an international publishing group. They are headquartered, or they were headquartered, right around the corner from here, at 3501 Market Street. So, I've spent a lot of my life in what is now known as University City, just blocks from here.

WC: And how long did you work for them?

JS: Let's see. Until my older daughter was born, in 1985, and then I took a break and studied psychology on a part-time basis at the University of Pennsylvania, when my older daughter Emily was very small. And moved forward in that, and then I had a second daughter. My daughter Grace was born in 1988. I did not finish a degree in psychology for a number of reasons, but one of them was that I was drawn into a political campaign. Lynn Yeakel, who ran for the United States Senate against Arlen Specter, the incumbent lieutenant

governor to capture the Democratic nomination.<sup>1</sup> And I led a team that put Lynn on the ballot for that primary, when she had fewer than one percent voter recognition in the state of Pennsylvania.

So, that really—getting involved with Lynn and her campaign, and Lynn, of course, had been the executive director of Women’s Way, and founder of Women’s Way. That experience took me into a very different direction in my life. And I had grown up in politics. I’m part of a political family in Connecticut, so I suppose it’s not ironic. We were just speaking previously about my son-in-law and daughter, who are very involved in politics in Boston. So it was really a natural progression for me, and I had many good friends who were involved in that campaign. I was a member of the professional campaign staff.

WC: Were you living in West Philadelphia then?

JS: Oh, no, no. When Gil and I, my late husband Gil Rosenthal and I, were first married, we lived in West Mount Airy, and then as our family grew, we moved to Chestnut Hill and restored an old, a very old, broken down house. [Laughs] And lived there for 25 years! Then he died in 2011. Before he died we transitioned, and moved to downtown, to Center City, Philadelphia, which was much easier—

WC: And your daughters, if I’m not mistaken, went to Germantown Friends School?

JS: Yes, both of my daughters went to Germantown Friends School, right. So we are a religiously eclectic family. [Laughs] Which I have always

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<sup>1</sup> Yeakel ran against Lieutenant Governor Mark Singel in the Democratic Primary, not Arlen Specter against whom she ran in the general election.

seen as a great strength! I was questioned about it closely, however, when I was in process for holy orders in the Episcopal Church.

WC: Really?

JS: Oh, sure! [Laughs] Do you want me to say more about that?

WC: I'd like to hear more about it, yes, I would.

JS: Well, I think it was of interest. Of course, everyone is questioned closely about, really, all aspects of their life when they present themselves for candidacy for holy orders. But it was not typical, I think, to have been raised as a Roman Catholic, in a very devout and religiously politically active family, to be married to a Jew, and to send my children very happily to Quaker school, and to love the Episcopal Church as I do. So it's an unusual background, and to this day, I am very active in ecumenical and in interfaith work in Philadelphia, and in the church.

WC: So you worked in publishing for a while.

JS: I did.

WC: You were in marketing in publishing, is that right?

JS: Yes, essentially I was in marketing in publishing, yes.

WC: How long did you continue that part of your—

JS: Well, I started that in 1978. Seven years, until Emmy was born in 1985. Again, had a longtime interest in psychology, particularly psychoanalysis, and a longtime interest in religion and psychology, so studied at the University of Pennsylvania on a part-time basis until I really felt myself called into a more active—active way to address society's ills. I think for a long time in my early years, I was looking for remedies for social problems for the world. I was a political science and English major. I had a very social science orientation,

and of course, a political one. So, what I found was that none of those remedies really sufficed, and I was led, I think, deeper and deeper into a vocational call.

WC: What kind of psychology did you study?

JS: Oh, gosh.

WC: Social psychology?

JS: Social psychology, organizational psychology, abnormal psychology. Really, a full spectrum, yeah. Object relations.

WC: I asked that only because when people study psychology, sometimes it leads to something else, but it depends on the kind of psychology you study. If you study educational psychology, you'd go in a different direction.

JS: That would have been a different direction for me. I was very interested—I'll give you an example. I was doing an internship for the old Child Guidance. Remember Child Guidance, that used to be over where CHOP is now, Child Guidance Center? And in those days, that was an organization that pioneered family therapy. But crack cocaine had hit the streets of Philadelphia and other major cities at that time, and there was such a sense of futility in trying to do family therapy with children who did not have intact families and trying to draw in a universe of caring adults who would participate on behalf of those children, and form even a loose association of a network of support around them. It was very, very difficult.

So when the call came to me to get involved with Lynn Yeakel, I was really ripe for thinking about a different way to approach social problems, and politics seemed a good way. I had a strong belief in her and in her capacity to do that, and in the people I worked with.

WC: Lynn Yeakel wasn't successful.

JS: No.

WC: How did that affect you?

JS: [Laughs] Well, that was a sad business. We knew it right away. First of all, let's just go back a second. She won the Democratic nomination in a landslide, and this was all featured on the front page of the *New York Times* the next day. We had defeated the party-endorsed incumbent, and she became the Democratic nominee. The general campaign against Arlen Specter was a really difficult business.

Arlen Specter had—it was the most expensive Senate campaign to date. This is now a long time ago, but he had ten million dollars going in, and we raised five million dollars in four months. But it was not nearly enough. I will say also that Lynn was not a seasoned candidate, and he absolutely was. He had a very professional organization, and we were, for the most part, not. I mean, we were smart; we were earnest. We among us had a lot of non-profit experience, but not a lot of hardnosed, bare knuckle political experience.

And that's really what happened. There was a lot of corruption throughout the election. She lost, overall, by less than two percent, of course, swept the city of Philadelphia and the suburbs. But through the middle of the state, and in Pittsburgh, she did not. So that's what happened. It was an extraordinary experience. It was a great lesson for me in sort of the limits of human agency. [Laughs] And I went forward from there. However, while I was working on that campaign,

I met a woman named Marciene Mattleman, who had founded an organization called Philadelphia Futures.

Marciene and her husband, Herman Mattleman, had been very active politically in the city of Philadelphia, but also on behalf of children, I will say, in Philadelphia, children in need. Herman Mattleman was the chair of the school board in Philadelphia for many years. Marciene was a professor of education at Temple. And she had formed this organization to really act as a conduit to bring private interest, private funding, private concern, to bear, focused on behalf of children in need in Philadelphia public schools. And of course, the need was very, very great.

Philadelphia public schools then and now really functioned very often as a frontline social service agency. In those days, I think—my numbers will not be right, but I mean, the graduation from high school is I think maybe 60 percent, with significant drop-out rate occurring at 9<sup>th</sup> grade. The number of children living below the poverty level who attend Philadelphia public schools is a very, very high percentage. So, it's a terrific organization which is still functioning. We had a program known as—

WC: You mean Philadelphia Futures?

JS: Yes, yes. That's broadly what it is.

WC: It merged with somebody.

JS: It merged with a group called White-Williams Scholars, which had a different, yet complementary focus. The White-Williams people, as I understand it, provided stipends for kids to get to school in the morning on public transportation. And then, I think, over the years they added other supports as well. So that was the merger. But

Philadelphia Futures, carrying on with a well known, well honored program named Sponsor-a-Scholar, which combined long-term mentoring with last dollar scholarship support, often by the same entity, but didn't have to be.

Anyone could sponsor a student. It could be an individual, a couple, a group of people, a sorority, a club, a corporation—and very often it was—foundations who sponsored whole classes of students. The students in those days were drawn from what was known as the neighborhood high schools of Philadelphia, primarily, not from the magnet schools, which had already drawn out some of the most talented kids from the neighborhood, right? So, we were looking for kids who had the greatest need, and yet the greatest capacity to benefit from the supports that this program offered: long-term mentoring, academic enrichment, college guidance. And as the years went on, I was there for five years.

WC: In what capacity?

JS: I was the associate director, so I really had a lead, I would say—besides Marciene—a lead responsibility for Sponsor-a-Scholar, as the associate director, and I also replicated the program in sixteen cities around the United States. Yeah.

WC: So you did a lot of traveling?

JS: I did. For a little while, I did a lot of traveling, most often in partnership with community foundations, which was really wonderful and very gratifying work. Community foundations have no particular axe to grind, no vested interest other than doing, identifying, how to act in the best interest of the community. So it was a very strong program, and we added features; we added the academic enrichment.

We added summer internships. We extended the length of the long-term mentoring once we had kids in college, and it was clear that they needed continued support.

So it was a very effective program. The essence of that program—we did a lot of replication work—was transferable to other communities. I've been away from it for a long time. I don't know how they are doing today. I hope they are all clicking along, helping lots of kids.

WC: How did you make the jump from the Yeakel campaign to Philadelphia Futures?

JS: Marciene Mattleman called me up the day after the election. She recruited me aggressively, yes! [Laughs] It's very hard to say no to Marciene Mattleman.

WC: This is true. I knew her when she was a faculty member at Temple.

JS: Is that right? You know of what I speak! [Laughs]

WC: Yes. And her husband.

JS: And Herman is a lovely man, yes. There are stories about Marciene. She's also a very effective fundraiser—so effective that when people would see her coming down the street, they would cross to the other side! [Laughs] And that is said with love and appreciation.

WC: One led to another.

JS: She's been fierce on behalf of children in this city, and both she and Herman have been honored. They're both recipients of the Philadelphia Award, very rightfully, yeah.

WC: Did you know Deborah Kahn [?] when she worked there?

JS: No. I had left by then. I did not know her, no.

WC: So you were there for six years?

JS: Five, five years. So, in addition to replicating the program, and working on the efficacy of the program itself, and helping Marciene in many ways, I, at this time, was also involved with a group of 30 kids and their sponsors, mentors, myself, and I will say that the work was absolutely pivotal to me, because what interested me most about it, and still does, ultimately, was the transformational power of relationship, more than anything. It was the relationships that assisted the kids.

WC: The personal relationships?

JS: The personal relationships, over time, for the long haul, yeah. So a lot of the work of that program, I think, was brokering relationship, translating between kids and their families, or among kids and their families, and the sponsor/mentors, and the program at large. And I also found that very often I used to describe my own little group of 30 as not a community of faith, but a very faithful community.

WC: So as part of your job as director, you were responsible for seeing that these 30 kids were mentored?

JS: Many of the staff members, each were responsible for 30 or so kids, yeah. And we were responsible for checking in with the mentors, checking in with the kids, talking with teachers and administrators in the public schools—really working in every way to make straight the way for the kids, and the families, to give them every support that we could bring to bear, to help the kids succeed. And that meant college. It meant access to higher education and succeeding there.

And then, over time, what success looked like, I think, developed more robustly. We needed kids who felt confident and assured that they had had all of the skills, acquired all of the skills that

they needed to succeed. So there was just so much. But my 30—all the kids were very dear to me. My 30 were so particularly, and their sponsors/mentors. So that would be weekly phone conversations, meeting with them one-on-one. So the families, largely, were people of faith, and understood what we were doing as holy work. And I understood what we were doing as holy work. That feeling, that sense, only deepened over time.

So I should say concurrently, I had already found the Episcopal Church. It's a wonderful story of how I found the Episcopal Church, I think. We were located, my office was located at Broad and Locust Streets, right across from the Academy of Music. I used to walk up Locust Street past Saint Marks. And remember, we recall that I was raised as a Catholic, and I see that there's a sign outside that says, "Mass on Tuesday, at," I think, "12:10." And I think, huh, isn't this interesting—I myself, also a student of religious history, by the way. These people have a rite that they also call "mass."

So I took myself in one day, and saw a group having the Holy Eucharist up in the chancel, and a woman priest presiding, and it just took my breath away! So literally weak in the knees, I made my way to the back of the nave, and sat down, and watched. The first person who spoke with me with any seriousness about the Episcopal Church was the sexton at Saint Mark's Locust Street. And I would go fairly regularly, and sit in the back and not participate, and just watch.

I will tell you frankly that I did not have a particularly positive impression of the Episcopal Church. I thought it was too white, too privileged. Having grown up, sort of, in the bosom of Catholic social justice ministry, I thought, frankly, that the Episcopal Church didn't

do enough, hadn't taken enough bold stands. And I didn't really know.

So then I was so drawn in liturgically, and I started going to Saint Paul's Chestnut Hill, so drawn in by the liturgy, by the beauty of the liturgy, by the quality of the preaching, by the presence of the sacraments, and the music, by how scriptural the Episcopal Church is. And actually, also I will say by the warmth of the people who embraced me, that I really quite literally fell in love with the Episcopal Church! [Laughs] To my great surprise!

And I took my time. And then I read everything I could put my hands on, because I felt like I had extricated myself from [laughs] the difficult situation, religiously, that I had been born into, and chose to leave. I wanted to be very careful and very clear about what I did next, and why.

WC: Were you a practicing Catholic at that point?

JS: No. I had been a practicing Catholic up until the time I went to— shortly after I graduated from Wellesley, and then it became untenable to me. I remember when John Paul II was elected Pope in the summer of 1978. And I thought to myself, very memorably, “I think I'm done. This is a young man who will live a long time. I will not see this church change in any significant ways for a good span of my lifetime. This is just, I think, not possible for me.”

I remember I was in New York City on business, and I wandered into Saint Patrick's Cathedral for mass. [Sighs] And this is not what one should do, I believe, in sort of assessing whether you continue in a particular tradition or not. But I prayed, “Oh, God, please. Let this speak to me. If this is the place for me to remain, let

me hear it now.” And it was the most dreadful, God-awful homily I think I’d ever heard in my life. I restrained myself from getting up and walking out. I knew I was done. By the time my daughters were born, I absolutely knew that I could not bring them into the Catholic Church.

So for a long time—I was also raised with the very prevalent belief among Catholics that this is the one true faith, and that everyone else is in error, so I didn’t have a natural—there was no easy home. There was no natural way. Quakerism, for a while, worked very well for us as a family. My husband was Jewish, and as an undergraduate at Cornell had attended Meeting for Worship. We knew a lot of Quakers, respected them deeply, and enjoyed meeting for worship. And of course, we loved Germantown Friends School.

Over a period of time, I longed for liturgy; I longed for sacraments; I longed for music. And I think that everybody is born—well, let’s say in our early years, a religious landscape takes hold of us. If we’re raised in a tradition, it’s there in the background. Mine certainly remained intact. So the Episcopal Church has been the most wonderful home for me. I like to say, “I embrace catholic and reformed, that description of the Episcopal Church.” I describe myself as an Anglican, and never as a Protestant. And temperamentally, I believe, I’m very much an Anglican. So it’s been a good thing. [Laughs]

WC: Do you remember who that priest was, the woman who was presiding for that first service?

JS: It might have been Marie Swayze, but I don’t know.

WC: This places that event sometime after 1974.

JS: Yeah.

WC: That's when the first women priests were ordained in the city.

JS: Yes. Yes. And I was in college when that happened, and I remember—of course, I was in a women's college that has been a leader in feminist thought. We had feminist scholars in residence. And I remember the general excitement, the kind of buzz around that, when I was in college. Yes, it's well after that. But I could not have become an Episcopalian, frankly, if there had not been a way forward for women in this church.

WC: I've talked to other members of this diocese, woman priests, who essentially feel the same way.

JS: Mm-hm. You know, there's another thing, though, that happened, that I think is very important to say. I wish that historians would look at this phenomenon, and I have some interest in looking at it myself. That is the 1979 *Prayer Book*, and its significance. I believe that there was a great influx, to the great benefit of the Episcopal Church, after 1979, from disaffected Catholics, when the Holy Eucharist became the principal service on Sunday morning. That is another thing. Highly unlikely that I would have become an Episcopalian if the Eucharist did not have the prominence in our church that it has today.

WC: For many years the Episcopal Church celebrated the Eucharist only once a month.

JS: Right. So if you're a highly sacramental person of faith, why would you? I mean, to leave that behind would not have been for me. But again, I wasn't happy in the Catholic Church, either, but let's just say it was really a wonderful confluence of the 1979 *Prayer Book*, the centrality of the Eucharist and baptism, the lifting up of those two

sacraments, the expanded way forward for women in the church. And timing. The timing of it, there's just how God works in our lives. And a way opened for me.

WC: Now, you were at Philadelphia Futures for five years.

JS: Five years.

WC: Why did you leave?

JS: Precisely to test what I understood to be a kind of a call to ordained ministry. And I'll explain how. I wanted to work with a younger population of kids, middle school children, one. Two, I wanted to work with people in community, geographic community. At the same time, I did not want to travel anymore. I mean, people think that business travel is glamorous. It's really a slog! And once you've caught the flu a couple of times on the airplane? And I still had young children, and also Gil had a very demanding career and traveled a great deal. It was just simply too much.

So there was a program called—it's still going strong, even stronger—Summer Bridge Germantown. It's now called Break Through, which was—its offices were housed at Germantown Friends School. I was on the board of Break Through, and we had an opening for executive director. And I thought, oh, this would be ideal. One of the gifts of that program, particularly, is that I was working with middle school children, from middle schools in the Germantown surrounding area, and older students who were interested in pursuing a career in teaching. It's not—it bears some resemblance to Teach for America, but it happens most intensely over the summer time, a very competitive process for college students, to apply. And they literally come and teach under the guidance of—we call them “master

teachers,” expert teachers. So there’s tremendous learning that happens at lots of levels.

WC: For college age?

JS: College age students, yeah. So tremendous learning that happens at many levels, and tremendous learning for us as a staff. We had a wonderful board. They still have a wonderful board. We were very involved in the Germantown community, and worked very closely with families. Again, it was an instance of not a community of faith, but a highly faithful community, again, where the power of relationships was absolutely central to what we were hoping to accomplish there.

WC: So you went to work for them?

JS: It was an independent, non-profit organization, yeah, 501(c)3. I was used to replicating and expanding programs, right? So, I’m trying to remember the precise circumstances, but I was always very interested in working [laughs] in Camden, New Jersey, and I had tried to start a Sponsor-a-Scholar program there, without much success. So I had some connections among the Jesuits at Saint Joe’s, and actually in Camden.

There is a community of Jesuit priests and brothers who live in Camden, and we were able to put together a program with kids from the city of Camden who came to Saint Joseph’s. My thought initially had been that we would do—we had very extensive after-school programming, all through the school year, in all places, a couple of times a week. Very demanding. My thought had been that we would do that in Camden during the school year. But families really wanted their kids to get out of the city and come over to Saint Joe’s. And so

the experience of being—we were running buses back and forth, which was no small job, and no small expense.

But the benefit of being on a college campus cannot be overestimated. So that's what I did. While I was there, I formally entered into the process of discernment for holy orders in the Episcopal Church, and in 2001, yes, I started at seminary, fall of 2001. My first week in seminary, the attack on the World Trade Center happened. So that was incredibly momentous. I did two years, to my great joy and benefit, at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, which is now the United Lutheran Seminary. My final year I did at General Seminary in New York City, and my master of divinity degree is from the General Seminary.

But I had the great benefit of the rigor of Lutheran teaching, particularly in Bible, homiletics, theology, and biblical languages. So I am intensely grateful for how it all worked out. And in addition to that, it really made it possible—I still had school age kids, and the Lutheran—

WC: Were you living in Chestnut Hill?

JS: Yeah, and the Luther Seminary was a mile from my house. So to me, that was a great, great blessing, to be able to do it that way. So I will always be grateful to this diocese for supporting me in doing it that way.

WC: You graduated from General when?

JS: 2003. Ah, 2004.

WC: Did you come back to the Diocese after that?

JS: Mm-hm. Yes, I did. [Laughs] I was called to this cathedral, as a matter of fact, by then-Dean Richard Giles, as missionary. I was, of

course, a transitional deacon from June until December, 2004. I was ordained a priest in December of 2004, again here in this cathedral. And shortly after, became Canon Residentiary here. I served here until 2007, and then went to the Church of the Redeemer in Bryn Mawr.

WC: Now, Richard was an activist priest, I would say.

JS: Activist in what regard?

WC: In rethinking the cathedral.

JS: Yes, yes.

WC: The Diocese was searching for a home for its cathedral, wasn't it?

JS: Well, I can say a lot about the Cathedral and its history. I've served here now more than ten years in total, and seen the Cathedral through a lot, including five different bishops during that time. I think Richards' great gift, and it was extremely controversial. We can't ignore that. It seemed a radical thing to do at the time, was to reorder the interior of the Cathedral. He made some very, very difficult choices. I would not have made all of the same choices that he made. I, however, reaped the benefit of the fact—I think we all reaped the benefit of the fact that we now have a cathedral sanctuary that is internationally renowned. It is a site where pilgrims still come to visit, to really marvel at what we've done. It lends itself extremely well to all kinds of worship, particularly diocesan worship. We can have 1000 people in our cathedral, or we can have very, very intimate worship, which we often do. So it has tremendous flexibility.

I'm aware of every issue involved in it, which we tend to, and we take good care of it. But it is a great gift, and it is an extraordinary thing. I think as time goes on, I'm very delighted to see new clergy

coming in to this diocese who were not here during that turbulent period, who aren't aware of, for example, the stories in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, or any of that, and who are able to just walk in and enjoy the beauty and integrity of the space in its own terms, right?

Also, I think it's always important for Episcopalians in this diocese to remember that one of the chief features of Anglicanism is comprehensiveness. We don't all have to worship exactly in the same way. What is very important to me, however, is that we worship comprehensively in this cathedral, and that every person in the Diocese of Pennsylvania who identifies themselves as an Episcopalian is able to come here and feel comfortable here, to feel at home here, and to always, always feel welcomed here.

WC: When you say worship comprehensively, what do you mean?

JS: Our worship is comprehensive. I think the fact that there are not pews, still, I think, is a bit of a jolt for some people. We worship, for example, in the round during the season of Lent, and for a good deal of the season, after Pentecost, during Epiphany, and during Advent. We move the furniture, I guess is what I'm saying, and I think that that's a new concept, still, for a lot of people. We do it not to be provocative, not for the sake of change, but because we think it makes theological sense to orient the people slightly differently, depending upon the themes of the season. So that's really what I mean<sup>2</sup>.

Our congregation, which is now a number more than 200, moves throughout the space on Sunday morning. We have the flexibility to do that, because of the open space. That's different for

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<sup>2</sup> Judith Sullivan added: "Worship at the Philadelphia Cathedral is comprehensive, meaning that it draws from the full range of beauty and history within the Episcopal tradition."

many parishes. We are certainly not Anglo-Catholic in our worship. Perhaps broad church is a better fitting description, but again, we use incense. I think we defy categorization in many ways, but comprehensiveness, I think, really, really captures the feeling. And of course, the welcome. The doors are open. Our tagline is, “Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral: a seat of the bishop, a home for the Diocese, an open door for all.”

Very notably, when I began my tenure as dean, I also, with the agreement of the chapter, brought the word “Episcopal” back into our name, which had been changed from the Cathedral Church of the Savior. Richard really understood the place as a cathedral for all people, persons of all faiths. And that’s wonderful. They’re not breaking down our doors, you know, to [laughs] have that experience here, though, one. Two, we are an Episcopal Cathedral, and I maintain that the Episcopal Church has a great deal to offer.

And from those commitments, our Episcopal commitments, we are really well placed to engage very actively in interfaith conversation, and in dialogue with our ecumenical partners, as well. For example, we just had a beautiful ecumenical service here in the fall to commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation, right? We frequently have interfaith worship here.

WC: The 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Luther?

JS: Yes, of Luther’s reformation. Excuse me. I know I’m speaking with an historian, and I hear that! Exactly so, sir. [Laughs] One of my other hats is that I am the chair of the board of the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia, have been for the last four years. So we have a lot of interfaith worship here. On New Year’s Eve, just a little more

than a month ago, we had, for the first time, a Watch Night concert and service for racial equality, and beautiful jazz. More than 300 people in attendance, and it concluded with an interfaith service. I think that we can be and do all of those things from our very solid position as members of the Episcopal Church.

WC: So comprehensive in some ways means inclusive?

JS: Inclusive, yes. Including. Everyone is welcome, yeah.

WC: And can worship in whatever way makes sense to you?

JS: Well, that's hard to do, I think, on a Sunday morning, honestly. But I think our embrace is open. We are curious about other faiths and other traditions, other denominations. And everyone is welcome here in dialogue, which we honor.

WC: Your impressions, your memories, of Richard Giles. Talk a little bit about him.

JS: [Laughs] Okay, I'm looking at my watch now. I'm going to have to do a service at noon. Because this could go on a long time. Richard?

WC: Well, if that's necessary, I'll come to the service, and we'll come back.

JS: That would be lovely. I have a deep and abiding affection for Richard. I just saw him, in fact. I was in the UK in October, and I saw them in York; I saw Richard and Sue. Richard is—is a genius, I think, of liturgical reform and liturgical renewal. He is a brilliant writer. During our time together, he published several books, and in fact, his last book he dedicated to me, his book on Presiding, which touches me very deeply. He had very clear—he had and has very clear views about liturgy, about the church. We agree on some things, and not on others.

I wonder sometimes if when I was elected dean, if some people thought it would be an extension of Richard, and precisely his views, and of course, it has not been that. Richard, I think, understood our cathedral here in Philadelphia as an urban monastery. Those words were often used, one. Two, it's hard to speak for Richard, so apologies, Richard, if you are ever reading this. I say this with humility and a great deal of imperfection. I know that he, also, I think, understood it to be an east coast counterpart to Saint Gregory of Nyssa in San Francisco. I don't think a cathedral, an Episcopal cathedral, can function in either of those ways, or should I say exclusively in those ways.

So a lot of focus for us has been on service to the Diocese, inviting the Diocese in, and also service to the community around us, and inviting the community in. We now, in the cathedral sanctuary, give away 20,000 pounds of food a month, 5000 pounds of food per week. We serve hot meals in the sanctuary. On Wednesday evenings, a hot dinner is served, and legal, medical, social work, dental services, are provided.

I've always been very mindful of the fact that even though this is what's known as the hottest real estate market in Philadelphia, that just blocks from our doors, people are living in abject poverty, that one of the first five federal promise zones was established just blocks from here during the Obama Administration, and this cathedral is actually in that federal promise zone. So my vision of our ministry here is I think one of deep service to the community. We want to draw the Diocese into that just as much as possible. So that is a pretty significant difference between our tenures, I would say.

WC: A dynamic man? An easy man to work with?

JS: Oh, very! [Laughs] No, he's not an easy man to work with, because he's like most geniuses. He has a laser view of what should happen, and he moves very directly, very precisely, to make that thing happen. He's conducting the train, and you're on that train, or you're not. And that's pretty much, I think, how the reordering of the space went. So I say that with love and appreciation for his vision, his energy, and his clarity.

WC: Well put.

JS: Thank you. [Laughs]

WC: So, you were here until 2007?

JS: Yes, mm-hm.

WC: And then you moved over to Redeemer, Bryn Mawr.

JS: Yes, yes, which was an unexpected move, to move from canon priest to associate director there. My very dear friend, Peter Sipple, was the rector there at that time, and Margaret Sipple, his wonderful wife, who had served on the diocesan staff—dear, dear friends of mine. Peter was making changes in the staff and was about to engage in a very large capital campaign for the expansion, for an addition to the church. We met two or three times. I have such regard for Peter. I would never have imagined it, because I've always been drawn, I think, deeply to urban ministry.

But I cherished my time there. I cherish my time with the Sipples. I learned a great deal. So I moved from this experience, I think—it felt very much like the mainstream of the Episcopal Church, and I got tremendous experience, pastorally, liturgically, in a very large congregation. And I will say that Peter was extremely generous

to me, and I made many dear friendships among the people of that congregation and learned a great deal about church administration. I had a strong background in administration already, you know, from running non-profit organizations, but I learned a lot from Peter.

And I don't think that I—let me just say, it prepared me. But the experiences, all of my experiences: academically, I studied under Gordon Laithrop, who is an unsung hero of this cathedral. He was actively involved in the reordering of the space. In the congregation on Sunday morning, he was the Lutheran partner in the beginning, when it was conceived that it would be an Episcopal-Lutheran partnership. So I had studied with Gordon Laithrop. I had studied at the General Seminary, and had the benefit of that good Anglican theology, and good Anglican liturgical training. I had been here with Richard. I understood, though did not always agree with, the theological underpinnings of Richard's views on liturgy. And then I had Redeemer.

As I look back on that time, the things that strike me is how much I enjoyed caring for, as a pastor, the people of the Church of the Redeemer. One of the things that I put in place there, that continues, is a lay healing ministry. That was, I think, a great blessing to the congregation, and continues to be so. But I look back on it with great love, appreciation. I was there until 2010, when Bishop Michel spoke with me. Bishop Rodney Michel spoke with me about discerning, about being the cathedral dean.

WC: One more thing about Redeemer. Bryn Mawr, that's a very affluent parish.

JS: It is, yeah.

WC: The congregation there is well-educated. And yet, it has a long history of collaboration with inner-city churches. Does it not?

JS: It does. Yeah, and it was something I was able to assist with, really, on my way out the door. My good friend Nancy Deming, the Reverend Canon Nancy Deming, was the vicar of Saint Gabriel's Church at that time. I was able to assist in the creation of a partnership between Redeemer and Saint Gabriel's, which I believe is still going strong. And I'm very, very glad of that. Yes, they do have a strong history of urban collaboration. I think we can always do more, and I think that the Saint Gabriel's ministry, particularly, was an important step forward.

WC: So Rodney reached out to you?

JS: He did! He did. At that time, I was the chair of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission, and to be honest, a couple of chapter members had spoken to me quietly. I was in a meeting with Bishop Michel, in his office at Church House, and the subject of the cathedral came up. He said to me, "You know, I'd like to talk with you about the Cathedral." [Laughs] And he invited me to be one of the candidates, and then we moved forward from there. That was, I think, in—

WC: Now, Rodney was here, of course, in that capacity because Charles was—

JS: Inhibited.

WC: —inhibited.

JS: Yes.

WC: Had you had an association with Charles before that?

JS: Well, of course, he ordained me. And serving at the Cathedral as a canon priest, of course I had association with the Bishop. It is the Bishop's church. Yes, Bishop Bennison was very kind to me, I will say, throughout the ordination process, and kind to me during my service at the Cathedral. He was encouraging, and he supported my becoming a canon priest. That would not have happened without his agreement.

While I served at the Cathedral the first time, I was charged with really care and nurture of the congregation, and pretty pointedly, directed to pay attention to the growth of the cathedral congregation. So by the time I left the congregation in 2007, there were more than 100 members of the Cathedral. There was a study done, I think, that came out in 2008; it was a compilation of information from parochial reports. The congregation that had had the highest percentage growth at that time was the Cathedral congregation.

So I will say that Bishop Bennison was with us, during holy week, certainly; he came and took his place among us. When he was in the house, he presided. That's usually the case with bishops. He led the chapter actively. He always attended chapter meetings and presided at the chapter meetings. By the time the inhibition struck in October of 2007, I was already at Redeemer.

WC: But that, of course, was a difficult time for the Diocese.

JS: Oh, yes. Yes.

WC: Did it disturb you, what was happening, personally?

JS: Oh, yes. Of course it disturbed me. It disturbed me personally, professionally. I have to say that as a fairly new priest in 2005, '06, '07, it was a disturbing thing to sit through the acrimony in diocesan

conventions, and to witness the vitriol. I mean, I'd just see priests high-fiving on the floor of the convention, because they were bringing down their bishop was a painful thing to witness, whether you agreed with that bishop or not. Yes, it was painful to me.

WC: Especially since you were new to the priesthood.

JS: Yes. Yes, I think that that's right. As I said earlier, I had fallen in love with the Episcopal Church. By then, I think, the rose-colored glasses were off! [Laughs] The bloom was off the rose. I don't know; the gild was off the lily? [Laughs] It is a very human institution, comprised of very human people, at all levels. That was clear to me by 2007.

WC: Flawed?

JS: Very human. No question. We are all in need of redemption, let us say.

WC: So talk about how you came back here as dean. Rodney encouraged you.

JS: Yes. Yes, he did encourage me. I should tell you that from the moment he spoke with me, I had a very strong sense of call, with a clarity really unlike—unlike any other, at any other point of vocational ministry. I believe I was called to come back. And for a number of reasons. So the process was—it's an interesting one, and it was also a process that I think made room for women, and people of color, because the bishop created the short list. I think it is still very difficult—

WC: That's Bishop Michel you're talking about?

JS: Bishop Michel created a short list of three people, yeah. So, there was, I remember, an article in the *New York Times* published shortly

before that time, about the Episcopal Church and other liturgical churches. What did they say about the Episcopal Church in those days—this was before Katherine Jefferts Schori—that it was easier for a woman to be elected bishop than it was for a woman to be elected rector of a cardinal parish. Women, at the top of their seminary classes. Women, disproportionately represented in our congregations. Or I should say, not disproportionately; that sounds like it's a problem. Women positively represented in our congregations.

So the process, very often, for cathedral deans is shortened, it's foreshortened, and it is a way to open it up a bit. Because I think, at least in those days, the cardinal parishes tend to be more conservative, as bodies. So there were three of us.

WC: Three—?

JS: Candidates—candidates. It was a very positive experience. I remember the night that Stephen Price, who was the lay—Stephen Price called me, and said, “We have elected you unanimously.”

WC: He was the—?

JS: He was the chair of the committee that led the search. He was also the treasurer of the chapter. Later, a friend of mine, someone on the chapter, said to me, “You know, and at that moment a window was opened. A breeze moved through the room. And I'm not kidding you,” she said. “Bells started tolling.” So it was a very exciting time, and a call that I experienced very deeply, and [sighs] which I continue to experience very deeply, and have felt so much the place where God has intended me to be in these years.

WC: So when you accepted the call, obviously something that you did without hesitation—

JS: Without hesitation, yes. I would say that's right.

WC: What were your anticipated objectives? What were your expectations?

JS: Ah! [Laughs] Well, and this is difficult to say, but I have spoken about it in other places and actually written about it. I had the impression that the Cathedral was in a bit of a shambles. I knew financially that it was in a shambles. I also knew that the congregation had contracted in size.

What I was not prepared for, though, was the shambles that I found the campus in. As soon as I could, I had scaffolding go up around the cathedral itself, because chunks of concrete and brownstone were falling off the building, onto the pavement. We had windows falling out of the frames, onto the sidewalk. Electrical fires in the walls. We were told that there were portions of the building that were essentially uninhabitable. Or, you could go there, but don't stand in the middle of the floor.

WC: This is the Cathedral?

JS: The associated buildings, Cathedral House and Gateson House. We at that time did not yet know that the chimney on the Cathedral was ready to collapse, and had to be rebuilt in its entirety, and that the columns on the front façade of the Cathedral are weight-bearing, and they were crumbling. Plus, the bell tower. I remember there had been a fire in 1902, right, the first Charles Burns church almost burned to the ground. The front façade stood, and a portion of the back stood, but the front façade stood pretty well.

The bell tower—so the bell tower, the rose window, the chimney, that whole façade, had been subject to that high heat. In

those days, the science did not understand what the effect of the high heat was on mortar, for example. You can go into the bell tower and see how high the flames of the fire went, because the polychrome is burnt right off. It's really pretty fascinating to see. Also, I remember we had had the stock market crash, which did not bode well for the Cathedral's endowment income.

WC: This would have been in 2008?

JS: Yeah. People have the impression in the Diocese that the Cathedral was a wealthy place because of certain endowment funds that are severely restricted and managed by the bank trustee. I'm going to leave all of those names out. We have been in litigation with them. So there had been a significant hit to the endowment income. When I walked in the door, I think that the amount of stewardship income that had been raised for the next year was \$20,000. There was a deficit budget in place. The staff had been on furlough a few times. The morale was terrible. Things were not in good shape.

And at the same time, the chapter, to their great credit, remained very positively focused on the possibility of a development project, here at the corner of 38<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Streets. I was questioned very closely throughout the process, the search process, about my capacity and interest in leading that project. So that was all ahead of us. I started on July 1, 2010, and the chapter wanted me in place on July 1, 2010. Not July 5<sup>th</sup>—July 1. I think on that first Sunday we had about 25 people in the congregation, and a good number of them had come from the Church of the Redeemer to encourage me. [Laughs]

So, that's about how it was. I started right away. I remember in the first week, I put on my gloves and I cleaned the office and threw out a lot of stuff. It was not great. It was not in great shape. So immediately, I did a couple of things. I changed the music program immediately. With the redirected income, I was able to bring Bob Tate. I knew that I needed—I needed someone with me whom I trusted, and who could back me up when I would not be present. Because there was a lot that I had to do outside of the Cathedral, particularly, involving the project.

WC: So you brought him down from Saint Martin in the Fields?

JS: He had retired the year before from Saint Martin in the Fields. He took a year away to just be quiet and discern in retirement. The story we like to tell is that the emails crossed in the air. As soon as he heard that I was elected dean, he wrote to me and said, "I will do anything to help you. Let me know." And I was writing to him, "Would you come?" So Bob joined me in October of 2010, and that was extremely helpful.

At the same time, Tom Lloyd, our director of music, who was a member of the congregation. He and his wife, who did not sing in the choir or really have any role in the music—Tom is professor of music at Haverford College—offered his services as director of music, without fee. So for the last seven years, Tom has been serving as director of music as a volunteer. He offered himself. We had Bob in place.

It was extraordinary, how people walked through the door and offered their services. Not long after that, Meredith Wiggins had relocated from California, and had served in the Diocese of California,

leading Godly play. I was very focused on developing a children's program, actually in the space where the Stevick Library had been located. We needed that space for congregational ministry, and the move for the Stevick Library was already afoot between Bishop Michel and the chapter before I was elected dean. Meredith Wiggins walked in the door and has been leading our children and family ministries since then.

Let me think; I don't want to miss anybody. Dan Tomko was here and in place. Michael Wolford had been already hired as Cathedral administrator, the day after I was called by the previous administration. He and I, which was an odd thing to do, but Michael and I had a period, a provisional period of three months. I think to Michael's great credit and to my openness, we worked that through and had a very long and wonderful time of service together that lasted about five years. So that all worked very well. The staff—so it was building a staff. There was a lot of energy in that.

And then, the congregation itself, sort of trying to restore [pause] to encourage them. To equip and empower them. To recover a sense of the energy and excitement that we had had around, what we called in those days, "congregational teams." To build that up again. We changed kind of the look of the Cathedral. We developed a new logo, right, which is actually the front façade of the Cathedral. It is that image, what remained after the great fire. It is in midnight blue, and that was very deliberate. It was a way of acknowledging our history, which is very important to us. This Cathedral, as I like to say, did not spring from someone's mind, like Athena sprung from the head of Zeus. It was here. There were many generations who went

before us, who are absolutely instrumental in its continuation here. The midnight blue is the color, the prevailing color, in the Blashfield mural on the east side of the chancel, right? So that is those colors, the blue and the gold.

Also, you notice ours are Drexel University's colors. That is no accident. Anthony J. Drexel, whose image is behind me, who hangs on this wall for the very important reason that he was a major benefactor and parishioner, a faithful man, of the Church of the Saviour. Those were the colors that he chose, with Edwin Blashfield, in the execution of that mural, for which he and his family served as models. So we changed the energy, and I should say, all of this prayerfully, and with God's help. It was not an easy thing to do. So there was work to be done in the congregation. There was work to be done in the community.

WC: As you know, I'm on very close terms with one of the chapter members.

JS: [Laughs] I do know this. Aren't you the lucky guy! [Laughs] Yes.

WC: There are times when she is one of the most optimistic people I know.

JS: She is. She is.

WC: Was your Cathedral chapter generally upbeat and optimistic? Was there any tension?

JS: The chapter, I think, was very positive and supportive, I will say. The chapter was operating in a very difficult space, remember, because we did not have a bishop diocesan. Bishop Michel was operating in a difficult space. The ecclesiastical authority at that time was the standing committee. And of course, the Cathedral is always, anywhere, in this polity, in this church is always closely identified

with the bishop diocesan. We did not have one. Bishop Michel, bless his heart—I love him dearly—served very, very well, and cared deeply about this cathedral. I will also say Canon Paul Mottl, I think, was very helpful through this process. Both of those very fine men served this diocese faithfully, lovingly, diligently, through a very difficult time. We owe them a great debt, all of us.

**Passage to remain closed for twenty-five years (June 5, 2043).**

WC: Very good. So you come in, and you face a need to rethink how the place operates. Did the progress toward those objectives that you had in mind move forward?

JS: Yes. Again, by the grace of God, they have all moved forward. Our congregation is very vital, very active. One of the great charisms of this congregation is its blessed diversity, and I mean diversity of all kinds, and its willingness to take risks on behalf of the gospel. I will say that the same has been true for the men and women who served on the chapter during my tenure. They have been blessedly open to moving forward, and of course, I mean specifically in the context of the Cathedral development project.

WC: Well, that certainly was one of the big challenges that you faced when you came.

JS: Yes. Well, it was falling down, literally. It would have fallen down. I was in office here six weeks when Bishop Bennison's inhibition was lifted, and Bishop Bennison returned to the Diocese. And Bishop Bennison, again, very supportive of me and my ministry, and I will say was very positive about my election as Cathedral dean as well. When I was elected dean, he sent me a beautiful note. I remember

thinking at the time, “Gosh, this sounds so optimistic! I think Bishop Bennison thinks he’s coming back.”

And lo and behold [laughs], he did! I have that letter. But Bishop Bennison was back, and immediately I spoke with Bishop Bennison about all that was taking place here, all of the reinvigorated ministry, everything that we were doing, which he was very positive about. And he said to me, “You know, Judy.” I can almost do an imitation of him. Something like this: . . . “You can knock yourself out here for twenty years.”

WC: Did he mean that in an encouraging way?

JS: Well, let me finish. [Laughs] “You can just work yourself to the bone;” let me put it that way. “Working, with God’s help, to build this place up. But after you, it will close.” And he was right. I mean, I’ll say he was absolutely right, because the congregation, the resources of the congregation now. . . . The days of large endowments being formed, I think, are well past in the Episcopal Church. It is unusual, the way people would bequeath great sums. We’re way gone from there, one. And two, this particular congregation, with all of its gifts, all of its diversity—and I mean geographic diversity; we have people coming from Reading, Princeton.

WC: On a regular basis?

JS: Every Sunday. So it would never—it would be very challenging to come up with the ongoing income, and the income needed to take care of the cathedral, provide offices, to do all that needed to be done to assure the continued ministry of the Cathedral in this place. He was absolutely right. I had begun immediately, charged by the chapter. I began in July. I immediately reached out to the Church Foundation,

to Dick Smoot, who was at that time the president or the chair of the Church Foundation. You'll recall that the Church Foundation was holding 3719 Chestnut Street, which had been purchased—purchased during Bishop Bennison's tenure, and to be held for use—

WC: The apartment building.

JS: The apartment building, the three-story apartment building, held by the Church Foundation, owned by the Diocese through the Church Foundation, because we needed that parcel to proceed. I called in a consultant to see if we, in fact, had a project, and he concluded very vigorously that yes, we did. We had great opportunity. More than just have a project, we had a great opportunity here, right? And I was also very mindful of the fact that we could not continue on as we were. Bishop Bennison confirmed that when he spoke to me in that way. But we were not going to be able to continue on forever.

I did not want to see the Cathedral being in the position of having to sell off chunks of its property or its campus without any kind of vision or unified plan to maximize the return on that, and to lose control over what would be built or developed. Frankly, if we had not acted when we did, at a time when conditions—market conditions, lending conditions, building costs, etcetera—were ripe, we would have been forced into a position where we would have had to sell off the land on the corner, at a price over which we would have far less leverage, and essentially no control over what went up there.

So we acted, I think, prudently. We acted at the right time, and we moved forward. Very quickly, Dick Smoot made clear to me that the Church Foundation had no interest in participating in the Cathedral development project.

WC: By lending you money, for example?

JS: By lending us money—I'm not sure we ever discussed lending money. We never asked them for money, but by—let's hold that part of the story. But in terms of 3719 Chestnut, they intended to sell it. They had lost a great deal of money on 3719 over the years, and they had already voted to put it on the market. So the Cathedral actually purchased a right of first refusal, and outbid—ultimately it was a Taiwanese buyer who was ready to pay a great sum of money for that—I found that many years later—to buy that parcel to put a Chinese library there.

But without it, we had no project, so we were really pushed to the wall. We scraped together every available resource that we had, to use as collateral, to be able to take out the loans needed from Republic Bank to purchase that property from the Church Foundation, in August of 2011, for \$2.65 million? Something like that. So we had that property.

By then we were engaging—we had put out a request for proposals and had interviewed about 35 developers. I had also very quickly formed what is known as the Cathedral Development Task Force, which is a group of very able people who met with me every Thursday morning for years, really each with their own portfolio of expertise, and I as the convener and the person with the ultimate responsibility. Many of them were former chapter members, or concurrently chapter members, and we reported to the chapter on a monthly basis, sometimes more than monthly, because the pace of business moves very quickly, often much faster than the church is prepared to, or is typically prepared to move.

So, we had the request for proposals. We put together a committee, including task force members, our task force members. We still hoped very much at that time to have strong diocesan partnership in the project. The bishop participated. Members of the bishop's staff participated.

WC: By then, that was Bennison?

JS: Yes, that's right. We had representatives from Standing Committee, Diocesan Council, and what in those days was known as the finance and property committee. And very clearly, the group that was selected was David Yeager and the Radnor Property Group. David Yeager is actually the consultant whom I had brought in early on, and so I recused myself from the vote, because I already liked David Yeager a lot, and thought that they were the right choice for us.

WC: They were going to develop the comprehensive plan? Is that right?

JS: Yes. Well, they were our partners. And I mean that absolutely we were partners. We formed a joint venture for the development of the tower parcel. So that was a portion of the project.

WC: You say tower. You mean the building?

JS: It is an apartment tower. It's 3737 Chestnut. It has retail.

WC: Not the Cathedral tower, but the apartment tower.

JS: The apartment tower, the commercial tower, 3737 Chestnut. So that was one portion of the project. There's 90 million dollars of equity in that, assembled. The Cathedral's equity in that project was land and air rights because we had no more money. We were tapped out. The rest of the project, which would be the Liem Azar Center, where we are sitting now, the undercroft, where the Early Learning Center is located now, and the new building, which is called 3717 Chestnut

Street, which connects through the back of the Liem Azar Center and the east end of the Cathedral, were all developed by the Cathedral with advice from the Radnor Property Group.

So the Cathedral is the owner of those properties, of course. So that's what we did. We acted at the right time, and when the scaffolding went up around the Cathedral, I remember thinking, "Boy, thanks be to God. We have done this not a moment too soon," because things were in such dire straits. When we had a lot of—there was a lot of work to do. There was a lot of zoning work that had to be done. There was a lot of work putting together that equity stack at 3737 Chestnut Street.

We had to work with the Historical Commission of the city of Philadelphia. Those two old Victorian brownstones which faced on Chestnut Street, which were falling down—it would have taken four million dollars just to fix the exteriors of those buildings—were on the Historical Register.

WC: That was the parish house and the old rectory.

JS: Yes. Well, they are known as Cathedral House and Gateson House. Gateson House was structurally unsound. The west wall was bowed, revealing—and it was in terrible condition. There had been work done on the foundation of that building, I think in the '80s. They tapped it, and it fell down. And Cathedral House was not in quite as dire shape, as it was a newer building, and a little bit more substantial. Gateson House was essentially a rectory. It was a single-family home. It was never intended for the use for which it had been purposed.

So that took us about a year. The Historical Commission ruled in our favor, and then the Preservation Alliance of the City of Philadelphia, which is a non-profit organization, not elected, not serving at the behest of the mayor, or anything like that, really came after us. That tied us up for many months, and finally we came to a confidential agreement with them, which I can't discuss.

WC: That was confidential!

JS: Correct. Let us just say about it that no one has cared more about the condition of the really significant history property, the cathedral, than those of us who have worked together on this project for the purpose of assuring its future. From the outset, there were always three goals to this project. To assure our continued presence here on this corner, since 1850, for the Episcopal Church, ministering to the people here. This is the third church on the site. Secondly, to create income streams, to provide us with a way to expand and deepen those ministries. And third, to provide a way to take care of our historic building, the Cathedral. And we have accomplished all of those things through the project.

We, I can tell you now, put about two million dollars into, I'm going to call it, the stabilization of the cathedral. We could not describe it as historic preservation, which is way beyond our capacity. But the cathedral is stabilized. All the facades are stabilized. The chimney was rebuilt. The bell tower is stable. The cathedral itself was built on a wood floor over dirt. If you stand in the atrium of the Liem Azar Center, and you look down at the lower level where the child care center is, you can see that there's been a tremendous amount of foundational work done. That is really a beautiful

metaphor for what we have done for our cathedral and its future, I think.

WC: There are three names that occur to me that I'd like to ask you to comment on, either now or after the service, if you're beginning to feel a little antsy if you've got an obligation in a few minutes. One is Dan Stevick.

JS: Yes, yeah.

WC: Who died just before Christmas, and whose library was here. The second is John Gallery, of the Preservation Alliance to which you've referred a minute ago. And the third is Michael Karp.

JS: Okay. We can do that right now.

WC: Go ahead.

JS: Okay, Dan Stevick. Dan Stevick is really a saint of our church. I know he taught at Philadelphia Theological Seminary. Do I have that right, PTS?

WC: Philadelphia Divinity School.

JS: Sorry, Philadelphia Divinity School. I know there was a change in the D and the T, which merged with Episcopal—

WC: Episcopal Theological Seminary.

JS: Thank you—to become Episcopal Divinity School. Is that correct?

WC: In Cambridge, Mass.

JS: In Cambridge, Mass.

WC: Right across the river from the Back Bay, where your son-in-law is.

JS: [Laughs] Yes. All true. Dan's work on the 1979 Prayer Book, and the centrality of baptism, the rite of baptism, I think, is such an enduring legacy. We all should be grateful for that. We are grounded

in baptism in our church as our first vocational call. And I will say that I really did not know him very well.

By the time I returned, the decision—I know there's a lot of pain around this. A decision had been made for the library to move, and there was a lot of back and forth, probably unhelpfully, about where it would go. But I knew that the decision had been made; Bishop Michel had weighed in. But I knew, from a congregational standpoint, I needed the space for the congregation, too.

As soon as I came, I immediately said, "Look, I'm new to this. I know you're under a lot of pressure, so let's take another six months for you to figure it out." So I extended the deadline immediately. Then, what we worked out ultimately—and I was involved in this with Catherine Ragsdale, who was by then the president of EDS—the books moved to Episcopal Divinity School.

It took a lot of wherewithal. I mean, there were some really wonderful and devoted people who sorted through those books, and retained what we needed to keep for the Diocese, and then what we had duplicates of, and what would be helpful to EDS. A lot of thought and hard work went into that. So the books were boxed up. It took \$10,000 to move the books to Episcopal Divinity School, and with Catherine Ragsdale, the Cathedral split the difference. So we paid \$5000 for those books to move to EDS, and Catherine came up with the other five. That, I thought, was the most pastoral solution that we could come to together.

I think the books, what I know now and I think you know, because you and I have been in correspondence about this, is that the

books sat in those boxes. I believe now they have moved on to a seminary in Africa, perhaps? Is that correct?

WC: Either Africa or China.

JS: Something like that.

WC: [Unclear] There were discussions about that.

JS: I know that for those who were so dedicated to Dan and the Stevick Library, that that is all very painful.

WC: When the decisions were being made about whether or not it could stay here, Dan, if I'm not mistaken, was ill during some of that process.

JS: Yes.

WC: And so unable to weigh in.

JS: I'm so sorry that that is the case. I don't know about that period of time. I don't know about that period of time. And I know he has died recently, and my condolences to his family and the committee around the Stevick Library. They were a very faithful bunch.

WC: Dan was the first interviewee for this oral history project.

JS: Is that right? Isn't that great, that you have recorded him? Yeah.

WC: We did him in 2013, perhaps? Maybe 2014; I can't remember.

JS: Was that when—had the books moved by that point? I think so, yeah.

WC: Yes.

JS: I think by '11 or '12. Yeah. I don't remember.

WC: Yeah, he talked about that, about the emotional effect that this decision to move the books had on him. You might read that.

JS: I would read that. I would read that.

WC: In any case, there was an important part of the process for you, sort of like—?

JS: It was going to happen, I think, inevitably, because the buildings were coming down, right? The decision had been made; we extended it six months. It was extended, I think, another six months beyond that. Ultimately, Godly play and opportunities for the growing children's ministry moved into that space. I remember we tore down the buildings in 2013, so it was really quite a short window of time.

As far as his agreement with the Diocese about the disposition of the library and all of that, I really had no information. And recently, when contacted by EDS, or you contacted me, somehow simultaneously, EDS was in touch with all of us, I was trying to see if there were any Memorandum of Understanding that we had, between the library and diocese. It was the Diocesan Stevick Library. So beyond that—

WC: At one time, I believe it was at the diocesan headquarters in Society Hill.

JS: That is very likely true, yeah, where, of course, they had a great deal of space. So honestly, that is, Dan Stevick, a blessed memory. We remember him.

WC: John Gallery.

JS: Well, John Gallery is a complex man, and my late husband was an architect, so I knew John Gallery for a very long time, through the AIA. [Laughs] John is a Quaker; let me say that. He is a very dedicated and devout Quaker. He's written reflections on the Quaker Peace Testimonies. He protested US action, I remember, in—in Yugoslavia, in that section, in the Baltics. He's a very complex person.

What John objected to, I think, most about our situation with the buildings and the historic designation is that John was concerned about preserving the strength of the statute for preservation. If we could find a way, in his thinking, around this, and were able to remove these buildings off of the Historic Register, Lord only knows what people would do with that window in the future. I think the expression I remember reading was that they'd be able "to drive a truck through it." [Laughs]

So I understand. I understand, truly, his dedication to historic preservation, and the importance of historic preservation in this great city. The great irony is that I am very concerned with historic preservation, and we were all very concerned with the historic preservation of our cathedral building. But this was the only—and I mean only—way forward for us. John retired at the end of 2012. We were able to negotiate with board chair, his board chair at that time, as John was retiring.

And I will say, we had wonderful assistance from our City Council person, Janie Blackwell, who was very supportive throughout the whole process. So that's what I have to say about John. He attended my husband's funeral. He is a person of, I think, great compassion and kindness, and when it comes to historic preservation, he's a tiger. [Laughs]

About Mr. Karp, I will have no comment! [Laughs]

WC: But for the record, there was a property that he never sold to the Cathedral.

JS: That is correct. That's right. Although I will say I have known him—I have known him for about 30 years, and probably I've had more

history with him than anyone else in this diocese. He was well-known to my late husband. He did, on a couple of occasions, tell me that he would sell us the property. But it became clear that that was not going to happen. I had had, really, the finest, most strategically placed intermediary, someone who was trusted by Mr. Karp, trusted by us. And it just wasn't going to happen.

It's very unusual for Mr. Karp to sell his property. This is a beloved property. It may be the first that he acquired. The property is still owned by him. There was no reason to think that he would sell that property to us for a price that made sense for the whole life of the project, so we proceeded without it.

WC: You sort of had to make peace with the fact that it was not going to happen, the sale.

JS: I quickly made peace, and in some ways this arrangement has worked out far better for the Cathedral. It would have been a very different project. That had been the initial vision, I think. Remember, Bishop Bennisson had his plan for the four Cs. The Cathedral was one of the four Cs. That goes back to what, 2000, 1998, something like that. No funds were ever raised, however.

WC: To buy the property?

JS: No funds were raised for the Cathedral project by the Diocese of Pennsylvania. So this entire project has been led by the Cathedral. The Diocese's financial participation was this: they invested \$1.6 million out of the proceeds - out of \$4 million that they received for the sale of Church House, in the \$90 million-plus equity stack of 3737 Chestnut, the apartment building. That building was sold in July of 2017, and the Diocese received a return on its investment of 50

percent. So they took out \$2.4 million on an investment of less than three years. So that was exclusively it. We were not going to acquire the property in any kind of reasonable time period.

WC: The Karp property?

JS: The Karp property, yes. Excuse me. The funding—we had described it. We have bank loans. We have new markets tax credits—very competitive program. Didn't know how long that program was going to last, and it's now in question in the Trump Administration. It probably will not continue, from what I read. A very competitive process, at which our developer partner was an expert. And the timing, the timing of what was happening in the market in University City, interest rates, all of those things. We acted at the right time. It was the right moment for the Cathedral, and we've been blessed by what's transpired since.

WC: Okay. The last topic on our agenda is to talk a little bit about your time as a board member at ECS.

JS: Ah! Well, I'm in my ninth year as a board member of ECS. We're fine for time. I think we should just continue through, and we'll be fine on the service side. I have really enjoyed my service at ECS. I'm a real enthusiast for Episcopal Community Services. I have good friends on the board. There's a great sense of community around it. I've been involved in a lot of different ways. I've raised a lot of money in my life, so I have served with the development advancement committee. I've been on the nominations committee. I've worked on ECS-parish relations.

John Midwood, who was the executive director when I came on, and in those days we were focused on the foster care, the after

school programs, some sizable federal funding that was coming in. Home care, in its way. But the whole landscape for ECS as a social service agency changed just prior to—as John Midwood was preparing to leave. The way that the city of Philadelphia did foster care changed very, very significantly. So ECS, again—and this is not the first time in its long history; you can probably say more about that long history at this point than I can, but it has a long, it has a storied history, a fine history in this city—has had to reinvent itself again and again.

We are a people of resurrection, of transformation, as this Cathedral, as I like to say, is literally up from the ashes. ECS has creatively, thoughtfully re-envisioned itself. So I served on the strategic planning committee that in the last two years has moved into this mobility mentoring model, which addresses multi-generational institutional poverty. And I am really excited. And you know, it's kind of a funny segue, because for me, I got into this line of work thinking about social services, social ills, systemic problems, and ways of bringing remedy. And I like to think that ECS, through this mobility mentoring, is going to do that, and yet at the same time, we hold together with it our Episcopal values, our baptismal covenant of upholding the dignity of every human being, of being Christ to those who are before us and [unclear] Christ to us, no matter what their religious denomination or persuasion is.

That is our context, and that is who we are and what we bring to bear as Episcopalians. It's an interesting parallel of being the Episcopal Cathedral and being here to serve everyone. So there is a nice confluence to Episcopal Community Services. I give David

Griffith a lot of credit. This takes a steady hand, and nerve, to be able to think this through, because there's a lot of funding involved. And as the federal funding dries up, as the systems change, literally. The ground changed under his feet as he was walking in the door. The agency had to act very quickly. We looked briefly at home care as kind of a for-profit feeder for the rest of—

WC: Senior home care.

JS: Yes, senior home care. Thank you. That just did not fly. And then I will say that fleet of foot, they took that [pause] less than satisfying outcome in stride, and cast about very judiciously, carefully, and found a way forward that resonates with Episcopal values, and Episcopal service and agency very thoughtfully.

WC: Over the last 30 years, ECS has reinvented itself at least twice.

JS: [Laughs] Yeah.

WC: You came on the board before David Griffith.

JS: Yes, with John.

WC: When John Midwood was leading the agency toward an emphasis, as you pointed out, on foster care, but also on homeless families, the Saint Barnabus mission.

JS: Yeah, Saint Barnabus, of course. Yeah.

WC: What was the decision to transition from that model, an emphasis on foster care, on homeless families, to the intergenerational poverty emphasis that David has introduced? Was that one that was easily made by the board, or was it a long and arduous process?

JS: It wasn't a long process, I'm going to say, but it was an arduous and painful one. ECS, upholding the dignity of every human being, caring for the most fragile among us. Those are the words that we've used to

describe what I call the ministry of ECS, over many, many years. The change was necessary. I think we took a long view at where we had been, what we were doing, and the difference that it had made.

Of course, it's made a great deal of difference in the lives of the families at Saint Barnabus, and those children who have been able to participate in the after-school programs, etcetera. But the decision was made that we wanted to make more impact. With all that God has given to us, we wanted to have a deeper, longer impact on poverty in this city. And you'll recall with me that Philadelphia is the poorest big city in the United States. So that's been done painfully.

What is happening now is a very careful assessment of how the existing ECS programs and ministries fit into this mobility mentoring model, and how we will continue to serve the same communities, and really build on our relationships there. And the desire, though, I think—again, I'm going to use that very good Anglican word—is to be comprehensive, right? In that same way that we, in the programs for youth and families that I described at the beginning of our talk, we hope to lift all corners, to provide all of the supports that people need to actually rise out of poverty.

That comes from many, many directions. It is education. It is housing. It is financial. There are issues of addiction. There are medical, health insurance-related issues. It's about higher education. It's about job training. It's recidivism. There is so much to this, and we found a really excellent model in Boston that has a terrific track record, and it seems a very good fit. So we have proceeded judiciously, carefully, very thoughtfully. David has a very fine staff,

and the board has been working closely with him. So I'm very hopeful about how this will go.

WC: David is a very positive and determined man.

JS: Yes, he is! [Laughs]

WC: And I can understand how he could persuade people to accept his vision.

JS: [Laughs] Yes.

WC: But it could not have been easy. I mean, there must have been some who were hesitant, yes?

JS: Well, we're a fairly conservative group of people, we Episcopalians.

WC: Yes.

JS: We just don't turn on a dime. People asked a lot of hard questions. A group of people went to Boston; they asked those people a lot of hard questions. We looked at it from lots of different directions. We have a close association with the School of Social Work at Penn. Those expert points of view were brought to bear. Nothing happened easily. There was a lot of thought, a lot of consideration. Do you know the board chair of ECS, who is the former CFO of Aramark? What is his name? I'm just blanking on his name at this moment<sup>3</sup>.

WC: I don't think so.

JS: Well, these are very careful, cautious—this is careful, cautious leadership, yes. This is terrible; I can't recall his name. I see his face before me.

WC: The problem that you're experiencing now is one that will only get worse.

JS: [Laughs]

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<sup>3</sup> Fred Sutherland.

WC: But it will come to you.

JS: So true! So true! It'll come to me in about an hour, yes. [Laughs]  
The "rem" is set.

WC: But the board was able to work its way through this without a lot of contention?

JS: I would not describe it as contention, no. I would say hard questions. This is not a contentious board. This is a hard-working board, a thoughtful board, a board that asks a lot of questions, a board with a lot of good expertise in lots of areas. And that's really been part of the joy of serving on the board. I learn a lot from everybody. Maybe David felt it as contentious; I did not. I did not.

WC: David did not say anything about contention. But an historian looks at a situation like this, and says, "Well, what are other people's perceptions about how this process worked?"

JS: Uh-huh. My perception, as both a board member—I'm going to say, I wear many hats. I mean, I'm a board member, obviously, a long-time board member—I'm rotating off this year—a member of the strategic planning group, and as an Episcopal priest and dean of the Cathedral, I will say that we looked at this very thoughtfully, and always bringing to it not only the social work lens, which is lifted up prominently, but also the Episcopal piece of this, our faith and our trust in God, and in the presence of Christ in this work, leading us forward. So it was careful. It was deliberate. Nothing was done in haste.

Nothing was done in haste, and it's not being done hastily now. The transition is happening over, I guess, a year or two, to weave in the existing programs and staff, to train them appropriately for the

mobility mentoring model. He, I'm sure, gave you great detail on all of this.

WC: He talked about it, and I've talked to Victoria Sicks about it.

JS: Yes, mm-hm.

WC: Quick to say that no existing programs will be eliminated.

JS: Right.

WC: They will be refined, re-imagined, to work into the new approach.

You know, obviously, John Midwood. He was probably the executive director when you became a board member.

JS: He was, yes. I have great affection for him. [Laughs] Great affection for him.

WC: He was also one of our respondents.

JS: Oh, yeah. He has a tremendous amount of history to share about the Diocese. I've had a very positive experience both with John and Dave, and with the board itself. Long may EDS continue—EDS! Long may ECS continue. Poor EDS. EDS is on my mind today for another reason, but long may ECS continue and flourish.

WC: Now, you were on the board when John announced that he was stepping down?

JS: I was, yeah.

WC: How did people react to that.

JS: Oh, everyone loves John. He had had a wonderful run, John and Faith, I will say. We trusted his discernment, his judgment, that it was time. So nothing but love, appreciation, and support. I remember that I asked everybody to stand up, and went over and laid hands on John, and prayed, which I think surprised some people, because not

everyone does that. And probably John, too. So it was a very emotional moment, but a very loving and appreciative one.

WC: The board, of course, was responsible for finding his replacement.

JS: Successor? Yes.

WC: How did that work?

JS: There was a committee, and I'm trying to remember. I think Gail Trimble was on that committee, John Pickering, and I can't—other ECS staff was on the committee, too. I'm really not very well-acquainted with the process. They interviewed—I know they brought into town, ultimately, a handful of candidates, who met with staff. Then they presented Dave to us as their choice.

WC: And that was a unanimous recommendation?

JS: Oh, yeah. Whoever knows about unanimous, but yes, I'll say it was a very positive thing. People were very excited and encouraged Dave. It was an interesting choice, Dave coming from his corporate background, a very faithful Episcopalian who had discerned that this was God's next call to him. And maybe a time for the organization to shift, to professionalize some aspects differently than previously, and he certainly has that background and expertise. So it was exciting, yeah.

WC: He's an impressive guy.

JS: He is.

WC: I interviewed him, and he talked at length about his previous career, and how it has prepared him to do this work.

JS: I also have the impression that he has grown a great deal personally during the course of his time at ECS. He'll talk about that, how his

eyes have been opened to how deep racism is, for example, how deep poverty runs.

WC: Views that you share?

JS: Yes, views that I share, yes. And he writes about this very well in his blog. Muddy Boots? Is that what it's called? [Laughs] So if people want to learn more, they can read that. He publishes it on a fairly, semi-regular basis, I would say.

WC: Muddy boots is what it takes to do the kind of work they're doing.

JS: All of us, right? All of us need to have muddy boots.

WC: [Unclear] themselves, too.

JS: Right.

WC: So you say you're going to cycle off the ECS board?

JS: Mm-hm. I have to.

WC: Do you have another opportunity?

JS: They're making me. I think I've run the limit of my term. Otherwise, I would stay. [Laughs]

WC: There's probably a policy on board terms.

JS: There is, yes. I think I've had three 3-year terms, so now it's time.

WC: Are you looking for another opportunity like this?

JS: Well you know, the Cathedral keeps my hands pretty full, and in addition I'm the chair of the board of the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia, and I have been for the last four years. But that will draw to a close before too long, although I will stay on as the recent past chair. I'm interested in a lot of deepening of ministries here. That's really the next—the next phase. There's work that I'm interested in.

We are moving as a congregation out of a pastoral model, into a program-size church. That takes really focused intentional support for the congregation, the development of lay leadership to a larger level, working with the chapter. We're in a new phase. I mean, as far as the development project is concerned, the next thing that's happening is that our offices, the Cathedral's offices, are under construction in 3717 Chestnut, the three-story office building.

WC: Where the diocesan offices are?

JS: Yes, the building that replaced the old 3719, not to be confused. So they are under construction right now, although the guys have taken a day off for the Eagles parade. We'll be moving in after Easter. And then all of this space in the Liem Azar Center, which was the original intention, will be utilized for congregational, community, and diocesan ministry. So this is a tremendous gift to the Diocese of Pennsylvania, a tremendous gift to the community. So, we're really excited about that, and all that is ahead.

WC: Is there anything you'd like to add to what we've talked about? Is there some topic, or person, or thing that you think we need to—?

JS: For the record, for the historical record, I'm grateful, I'm so grateful, for the opportunity to serve here, and for the people who have served with me. Everyone should know that this has been a magnificent ensemble act, and we've really been blessed by the service of so many dedicated people. So that is the Cathedral development task force, the chapter, over the years—extraordinary faithfulness, courage. The task force, the chapter, the staff. I will always be grateful to Bishop Rodney Michel for seeing this in me, and for taking the risk on me.

WC: When you took over, when you were moving towards becoming the dean of the Cathedral, you were also going through a personal crisis.

JS: Yes, that's true. My husband was dying, right.

WC: Did those two things—?

JS: Ugh! [Laughs] Well, within the space of twelve months, I very significantly changed vocational job, I moved my household, and my husband died, all within the space of one year. So I'm very grateful that Gil lived to see all of this, and you know, he had a lot of real estate development experience, and had built a lot of big buildings, and I think that some of that had rubbed off on me in a very positive way. So I really had no—I was ready to do this project. Let's say that. I was ready to do this project.

Actually, the name David Yeager came to me through Gil, who was at an urban land institute conference, and ran into Paul Sehnert, who is an Episcopalian, and he is in charge of property at the University of Pennsylvania. Gil asked Paul, who knew this parcel very well, who knew the situation very well, who would be a good—who would be a good consultant for the Cathedral. The name of David Yeager and Radnor Property Group emerged. So Gil lived long enough to see me installed as dean, and to know that we were underway. He died in June. We purchased 3719 Chestnut in August, and that was in the works, so that's a bit of my personal history.

WC: Okay.

[End of Interview]

