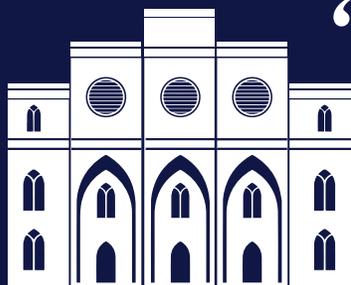


The EPISTLE

Fall 2021



*“O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come...”*

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Staff and Church Leadership

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Senior Associate Rector

The Rev. Alyse E. Viggiano
Assistant Rector

Joanna Unangst
Seminarian

Kurt Unangst
Seminarian

James Pickett
Seminarian

STAFF

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Minister of Music

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Minister of Youth, Children, and Families

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Jameson Bloom
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Head of School

Candi Sparrow
Preschool Manager

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Cover Photo: May 9, 2021, the first in-person worship service after 15 months of church closure. Taken by Dennis Brack.

A Letter from the Rector



Dear People of St. Paul's:

Before heading off to seminary, I completed an undergraduate and graduate degree in education. My plan was to become a history teacher. While things took a different turn, I still sometimes wonder what my life might have been like if I had followed that initial calling. In particular I wonder what it would be like to be a teacher of history today when the topic has become so highly charged and so extremely politicized. These wonderings caused me to recall one of my favorite Billy Collins poems. In true Billy Collins fashion, it is both deeply funny and deeply serious.

The History Teacher

*Trying to protect his student's innocence
he told them the Ice Age was really just
the Chilly Age, a period of a million years
when everyone had to wear sweaters.*

*And the Stone Age became the Gravel Age,
named after the long driveways of the time.*

*The Spanish Inquisition was nothing more
than an outbreak of questions such as
"How far is it from here to Madrid?"
"What do you call the matador's hat?"*

*The War of the Roses took place in a garden,
and the Enola Gay dropped one tiny atom
on Japan.*

*The children would leave his classroom
for the playground and torment the weak
and the smart,
mussing up their hair and breaking their glasses,*

*while he gathered his notes and walked home
past flower beds and white picket fences,
wondering if they would believe that soldiers
in the Boer War told long, rambling stories
designed to make the enemy nod off.*

We now live in an age and inhabit a world where truth telling is often seen as suspect and where truth tellers are often vilified. Given these current circumstances it is easy to have some sympathy for the teacher who wants to shelter and protect, and gloss over unpleasant realities. Yet underneath Collin's words are the echoes of the famous Santayana quote that "Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it." Learning history means embracing truth. All of it.

As people of faith we are told that seeking the truth sets us free. I would argue that it also gives us hope. While knowing our history causes us to confront the worst of our humanity, it can also inspire us to embrace the best of our human experience. As we continue to move through this challenging season of our common life I pray that when our chapter in the history of St. Paul's is written that we will be known for our veracity and faithfulness. I think that the pages of this Fall 2021 Epistle Magazine overflow with examples of both. As a people and as a parish we continue to be about our mission to *Shine as a Light in the World to the Glory of God*. That light continues to shine, as our parish programs thrive, and our light spreads through our community and into the world, as we seek to serve others. In addition, we welcome many new members of the parish staff, celebrate our incredibly resilient school, and continue to look with hope toward the future. We have much to be thankful for and much to anticipate, confident that God is not only our help in ages past, but also our hope for years to come.

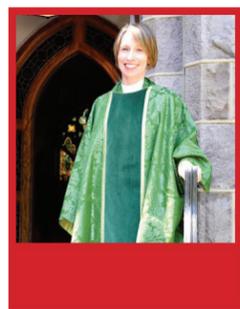
The Rev. Oran Warder



 Life at St. Paul's 



Welcome to the New Staff & Seminararians



Fall 2021 is a new season to say the least, and with this new season brings new faces to St. Paul's staff and seminararians. To get to know these new faces we've asked some interesting questions that give you a sense of who they are and what their ministries will add to St. Paul's.

What was your spiritual upbringing?

JENNI: I grew up in a Scottish home really open to story, mystery, wonder and imagination, but not really religious. In about third grade, a local church displayed a giant display of Gospel scenes (starting with the Annunciation) at the park where we went to see Christmas lights. As my mum told me the story of these scenes unfolding, I was hooked! Long story short, I started "sneakily" planning sleepovers with friends to go to church with their families on Sundays. In fifth grade, I discovered an Episcopal Church...and it was in that community that I came to know and love Christ!

LILLIAN: I am a cradle Episcopalian! I was raised in several churches in the Episcopal Diocese of Upper South Carolina (EDUSC) because both of my parents are priests. My faith was also strongly formed by Camp Gravatt (the Episcopal Camp and Conference Center in EDUSC), Diocesan Youth Ministry, and Campus Ministry at Clemson University.

JIMMY: I grew up in a small Episcopal parish in Western MA. As a little kid I would sleep over my Great-Grammy's house on Saturday nights, and we would go to Church every Sunday morning. My spirituality was, and continues to be, nurtured through the Eucharist and growing food in the garden.

KURT: I was baptized into the United Church of Christ. I grew up in a fundamentalist non-denominational church which immersed me into rich biblical study and reverence for the nearness of the Holy Spirit. As I grew up, I grew away from this tradition, spent years studying and worshiping in the Reformed (Calvinist) tradition. The Holy Spirit never gave up on me, and I found what I feel is my true church home in the Episcopal church.

JOANNA: I was raised in a conservative Calvinist tradition, the Christian Reformed denomination. I

greatly appreciate my spiritual heritage that encouraged rigorous theological debate and also provided fantastic Biblical literacy. These very hallmarks of my parent's ecumenical tradition led to my home in the Anglican communion as an adult, and with a commitment to warm and increasing ecumenical (and inter-religious) relationship.

Starbucks or Dunkin or Other, and what do you order?

JENNI: I'll choose local if given the option...otherwise, a "half-sweet iced white mocha" or a "misto (cafe au lait) with one pump of chocolate" from Starbucks.

LILLIAN: I try to go to more local coffee places, but regardless of where I am, I get a plain latte!

JIMMY: As a New Englander my body says Dunkins for a large iced black, as a Seminararian at VTS my soul says The Flamingo for a cortado.

KURT: I prefer my coffee to come from an unassuming hole in the wall that roasts their own beans in the back, the baristas are covered in tattoos, and the drink menu is sparse. My drink of choice is a cortado.

JOANNA: Definitely an independent coffee shop, with a radiantly clean espresso machine! In the morning, I order decaffeinated lattes with almond milk. In the afternoons, a decaf cortado. Caffeinated, once in a while, as a treat.

What is the title of your autobiography and why?

JENNI: I feel like the "title" of my "autobiography" is constantly evolving, but something like "Wandering and Wondering: Tales of an Ordinary Pilgrim" might be an overarching thread that ties both the silly and the serious stories together on the way!

LILLIAN: The Life and Times of Lillian Hardaway. I would probably go for this simple title and then have a funny subtitle that would draw people in more.

JIMMY: Taste and See: The story of finding acceptance and community through growing and sharing good food.

KURT: "Awkward and Anglican" I appreciate and identify with the story of St. Ignatius who, out of a growing love of self and God, made numerous wrong turns in his journey to discover who he was as a follower of Jesus Christ. I see many parallels to my experience.

JOANNA: "Overthinking: A Musical" One of my favorite at-home pastimes, much to my teens' paralyzing embarrassment, is singing the day's events in rhyming verse, while occasionally adding (terrible) choreography. The overthinking is a natural gift/curse, and I made a career out of it as a psychotherapist. God was in a great sense of humor when I came earth-side.

You have a late night talk show, who do you invite as your first guest and why?

JENNI: Maybe this would be a bit "off-genre" for a late night show, but I'd bring on theologian, poet, and conflict mediator Padraig O Tuama, because his voice resonates with such honesty and timely, necessary truth and healing.

LILLIAN: This is a tough one, I will go with Presiding Bishop Michael Curry. He is kind and funny and would also be able to deliver a message of hope!

JIMMY: My friend the Rev. Rachel Field from the Diocese of Vermont would be my first guest on "Welcome to Farm Talk" a late night show where we talk about the spirituality of farming and share stories like talking about a pig giving birth while at a dinner party hosted by the Bishop.

KURT: I would invite none other than Mr. Stephen Colbert. He'd be my choice because of his quick wit, humor, and his insights into the changing face of public faith.

JOANNA: The Rev. Dr. William Barber, co-chair of The Poor People's Campaign. He's inspired, brilliant, charismatic, with truth radiating out from him like it was manufactured in his marrow. It might not be the most "funny" of episodes, though it would radiate with world-changing hope, conviction, invitation and inspiration.

What are you looking forward to this fall?

JENNI: Honestly, I'm looking forward to beginning to meet people and to building new relationships as we emerge together into this creative new season in the life of the Church. (More concretely, I read this past spring that Mo Willems has a public art exhibit coming up at

the Kennedy Center, and I'm looking forward to taking Andrew to that among other things as we continue to explore our new hometown.)

LILLIAN: I am excited to be part of the St. Paul's community and meet people! I also recently purchased a Virginia State Park Pass and I am excited to start exploring this new state!

JIMMY: I'm looking forward to worshiping in community and exploring the forests, farms, and rivers of Virginia.

KURT: I'm looking forward to new ways to gather. I am hopeful that we will rekindle and also create paths of connection and community at St. Paul's. I hope to walk with others as we unravel the mysteries of our true selves. How do we listen to, and respond to, the voice of God?

JOANNA: I can't wait to spend more time with St. Paul's and in the greater D.C. community exploring, deeply listening, being transformed through the witness of God through nature, Scripture, and other people. I look forward to my kids (hopefully!) living a more in-person academic and social life. My kids are getting back to lessons for their passions (fencing, martial arts, acrobatics), and we plan to take a few great family hikes. I enjoy yoga and fitness, so just for fun, I'm going to take an aerial silks class, too.

You have headphones on, what are you listening to?

JENNI: Unpredictable! It all depends on my mood. (But lately it's been mostly iFit trainers getting me motivated and moving on my treadmill!)

LILLIAN: Camp Gravatt has a mega-playlist that can be put on shuffle and you never know what you'll hear! If I am listening to music this is probably what I have on. It reminds me of camp and the musical selection is pretty diverse so it never gets old!

JIMMY: A mix of folk, hymns, and pop. Everything from Traditional Scottish tunes to Hildegard von Bingen and Taylor Swift.

KURT: A vast range of sounds and artists. Deep cuts of Motown B-sides, post-punk, lyrically gymnastic hip-hop, jazz with lots of horns, and some country gospel for good measure. I can get down to most music.

JOANNA: Often, it's mindfulness meditations, or using the app Pray As You Go to reflect on the daily lectionary or to practice the reflective and Ignatian "examen," which I highly recommend. I do love music, so I fill the gaps with varied evocative, beautifully-phrased, image-rich art. I love Puccini's operas, Talib Kweli, and our patron saint of Covid vaccines, Dolly Parton.

St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool

Celebrating a Successful Inaugural Year!

BY KRISTIN TEETERS, HEAD OF SCHOOL



2020 was not an easy year for many things, but starting a new school, certainly not easy! The challenges were great, but under the steady leadership of Interim Head, Chris Byrnes, SPEP opened its doors on September 8, 2020 welcoming 60+ students into the building. Joyful children (and joyful parents) continued to walk through SPEP's doors each and every day - not one single day of health-related closure. All of us at SPEP are grateful for this success and thankful to the entire school community for so diligently following recommended health protocols and policies to ensure SPEP stayed healthy and safe.

Some of the highlights from the year include:

- Field trips galore
- Furry, feathered, and scaly visitors (Harry the Tarantula, Hammy the Pig, baby chicks, Reptiles Alive and more!)
- Weekly Chapel
- Kindergarten Graduation
- Wall of honor recognizing long serving staff and the generosity of those supporting SPEP's inaugural year
- Electronic catalog of the 1,000+ books in the SPEP library
- All while staying under budget!

This coming year will be even better! Over the summer a reconfiguration of SPEP classrooms was underway. Expanding some classrooms and moving the Toddler and 2s classes downstairs with the 3s, the 4s and Ks moving upstairs, allows for more students to enjoy our programs. We will be welcoming 70 children through our doors this year along with 20 staff members. Children will continue to be nurtured and engaged by the creative and developmentally-appropriate curriculum our teachers carefully curate each year, weekly chapels, and our older children (3s, 4s, and Ks) are further enriched by weekly off-site field trips and special classes in art, science, music, resource, and library.

We look forward to soon hearing joyful voices and laughter back in our classrooms and playground and invite you to witness first-hand the joys of the SPEP program by strolling by the courtyard or feel free to contact the school office for a tour.



SPEP NEWS



The teachers and staff of SPEP are ready for a great school year!



First Graduation of SPEP

On June 4th St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool celebrated its first graduation with a ceremony in the sanctuary. After a long year of masks and restrictions, these brave students certainly deserved to be honored. It was a morning filled with pride and joyous celebration as we marked the end of the first year of the new preschool program at St. Paul's. After the ceremony family and friends gathered in the courtyard for a picnic lunch.



Plaques Installed at SPEP

This June at the first graduation ceremony for the St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool plaques were presented commemorating the service of teachers and the support of donors. Among those recognized were Anne Land, for 25 years of teaching, and the Humphrey Family for the designation of the Offutt Library. A plaque thanking members of the Early Risers Circle, founding donors supporting SPEP, was also unveiled.



Establishment of St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool Scholarship Fund

This May the Vestry of St. Paul's approved the establishment of the SPEP Scholarship Fund. St. Paul's Episcopal Church is pleased to recognize, acknowledge and thank St. Paul's Nursery and Day School for the establishment of the scholarship fund to provide scholarships for students enrolled in the church's new school, St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool.



Outreach at St. Paul's

BY LAURA SIMMONS



During the past 16 months with the support of numerous generous donors, the St. Paul's Lazarus Ministry provided substantial financial assistance to our most vulnerable Alexandria neighbors. We are blessed to be a parish filled with many big-hearted, kind, and giving people who truly care about those in our city who are struggling. The Lazarus Ministry also receives grants from a couple of different foundations whose annual support is vital to running our ministry. Without donations from people and foundations the Lazarus Ministry would simply not exist.

are a vital part of that equation. This assistance is life changing for so many; it lessens their stress and it frees them up to stop worrying about paying bills helping shift focus to job searching.

The Lazarus Ministry also received an endowed gift facilitated by ACT for Alexandria. Initiated by a doctor in Washington, D.C. who is not a member of St. Paul's, each year the Lazarus Ministry will receive a bit over \$10,000. As his focus has been in the medical profession, we will try our best to use those funds to cover medical bills and prescription medicine in his honor.

Recently we have had the great fortune of receiving additional funds from two different groups. St. Paul's Lazarus Ministry was one of four groups the City of Alexandria entrusted to distribute COVID relief funds, a large amount of money, in a very short time frame. These funds were given to help residents impacted by COVID get back to normal. This "Bridge Funding" came with the request not only to help pay rent, utilities and medical bills as we normally do, but also to help with transportation needs and phone bills. The idea was not just to keep people in their homes, but also to help them get back to work. Cars and cell phones

Quite simply, the more funding we have, the more people we can help. Every dollar we get for Lazarus Ministry goes back into our community to help our neighbors. These are people who are the last ones to get back to normal after experiencing the devastating financial impact from COVID 19. The Uber drivers, the busboys and servers, home healthcare workers and babysitters. The mission of the Lazarus Ministry is to let them know they are not forgotten. You can make a donation to the Lazarus Ministry at any time through our website stpaulsalexandria.com/lazarus-ministry.

This June St. Paul's raised funds to support our mission partners, Casa Chirilagua. Serving the Arlandria neighborhood, Casa Chirilagua oversees community programs and food distribution to over 100 families. Casa Chirilagua started as a mentoring and tutoring program, but when COVID-19 struck last year they expanded their outreach to provide emergency community relief. In response to the crisis that disproportionately affected their neighborhood, Casa Chirilagua distributed 900K lbs of food, created an in-house food/cleaning items pantry, distributed \$162,000 of financial assistance for rent and utility expenses, and opened their doors as a Kids Club and Teens Club learning hub for virtual schooling. St. Paul's raised over \$5,000 to help Casa Chirilagua continue to serve our neighbors in the Arlandria neighborhood.



This July St. Paul's raised over \$25,000 to support the Pennies from Heaven Scholarship Drive. The relationship between St. Paul's and the Episcopal Diocese of South Sudan is very special and long-lasting. Over the years, donations from St. Paul's, specifically the Pennies from Heaven Scholarship drive, have been key to supporting students and faculty at the Renk Basic School in South Sudan. Donations during the COVID-19 pandemic are especially crucial as they enable the Renk Basic School to provide teachers with PPE supplies.

St. Paul's is proud of its decades long relationship with the Renk Basic school and we are so grateful to everyone who donated to this year's scholarship drive.

As students in Alexandria prepared to go back to school in late August, the Lazarus Ministry collected school and personal care items for families and students in need. Boxes stacked up in the church office filled with supplies ordered by parishioners who once again answered the call to give.



Carpenter's Shelter Recognition

In December 2020 the Carpenter's Shelter cut the ribbon on the New Heights development at 930 N. Henry St., a 60-bed shelter serving the homeless population in the city of Alexandria. St. Paul's provides meals monthly and has been a financial supporter of Carpenter's Shelter for many years. Earlier this summer, Oran stopped by the new building to take a look at a plaque recognizing St. Paul's as one of the founding members of the Carpenter's Shelter. We are proud of the support this parish and many of our parishioners give this important community resource.





Seeking the Welfare of the City Investing in Restorative Economics in Alexandria

BY ORAN WARDER

Rector’s Note: *What follows is Part I of a three-part St. Paul’s parish outreach proposal. It is a proposal that, in some form or other, I have been pondering and praying over for several years. While it is still simply a proposal and still requires a considerable amount of development, I believe the time has come for a broader parish conversation. Part I outlines the initial idea.*

Part II, which is currently underway, involves community conversations with others engaged in similar efforts (other faith communities, local non profits, local business and community leaders). The goal of Part II is to confirm we are seeking to meet a real need that is currently unmet and to find potential partners.

Part III will be the presentation of a more comprehensive and complete proposal for parish consideration. My hope is that we can begin at some point in 2022. In the meantime, I invite you to join me in pondering and praying as we seek to discern where God might be leading us.

Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you...for in its welfare you will find your welfare Jeremiah 29:7

Living over 2,500 years ago, God’s Prophet, Jeremiah, understood a simple and profound truth, that all human societies are both interconnected and interdependent. Even in exile, Jeremiah knows that his well being, for good or for ill, is directly tied to the well being of his neighbors. This is a lesson that God’s people keep learning and re-learning and is a lesson that we, to our great detriment, often forget. One of the harsh lessons that the global pandemic has taught us is that our human interconnection and interdependence can bring forth both weal and woe. While we have witnessed first hand heroism and sacrifice that have sustained and saved our lives, we have also seen how a virus can ravage the vulnerable and bring to the fore the vast and indisputable inequalities and injustices that exist in our local and our global community. For those living under the consequences of these unequal and unjust systems and circumstances, this is a constant reality. For those who created and those who consciously and unconsciously perpetuate and benefit from these conditions, this has been a time of awakening and reckoning.

In several places in both the Old and New Testaments, the Bible speaks of the sins of parents being visited on their children. For some, this adage has served as a warning against divine judgment, others have seen it as an antiquated and unenlightened remnant of the distant past and insist that we are only responsible for our own individual actions, and can certainly not be held accountable for the transgressions of past generations. Perhaps another way to view this recurring biblical theme is that it is less of a warning and statement of judgment and more of an observation and explanation of the complexity of human relationships over time, and also reveals that fact that sin has a corporate dimension. One relevant example of this dynamic is the long and corrosive legacy of racial violence and injustice, and the undeniable truth that, in spite of many gains, these past sins can and do have a lasting and present reality. The question, of course, is what do we do about it? How do we atone for past generational sins? Rather than retreat into paralysis or fatalism, how do we actively break old

patterns and create new systems that are more just and equitable and serve the common good?

At St. Paul’s, we have historically answered these questions in two ways, we have focused on the formation of disciples (focus on the individual inside the Church) and we have focused on serving the needs of the community (focus on our neighbors outside the Church). Both of these responses are deeply connected and both are expressions of our primary task, the worship of God. The “making” of disciples is the work of a lifetime. Shaping and forming Christians as ambassadors of Christ and agents of reconciliation is our strongest and best way to advance the values of the reign of God in the world. Constantly engaging this work, inviting others to share the journey, and joining together for corporate action can create a powerful force for positive change and transformation. Serving the world in God’s name is an act of thanksgiving. We have been richly blessed, and using our blessings to be a blessing to others is a natural and faithful response.

Over the last two centuries, the parish of St. Paul’s, in response to needs in the Alexandria community, has reached out to try to address those needs. The basic pattern has been to identify the issues, bring together the people and resources that can make a difference, look for community partners, and set to work. The results have borne much fruit. We have helped to establish and support hospitals, shelters, food banks, schools, early childhood education centers, literacy programs, and many others. The most recent iteration of this parish pattern has been the establishment and continued support of the St. Paul’s Lazarus Ministry. This ministry has become our flagship outreach program. It is the largest in terms of impact in the larger community, the largest in terms of financial assistance, and the largest in terms of connection to the most vulnerable of our Alexandria neighbors. This is Gospel work, and particularly during this difficult season, life saving work. There will always be a need for this type of immediate emergency assistance.

As essential as this ministry is, however, it does not directly address the systemic issues and underlying circumstances that lead to the need for the existence of the Lazarus Ministry in the first place. Part of the challenge of addressing systemic transformative change is not being overwhelmed by the enormity of the task and discerning what particular aspect to address. Following the historic pattern of St. Paul’s, this proposal seeks to start a conversation. This proposal is in many ways a next step for the parish to not only continue necessary emergency assistance, but also

create and support a positive cycle that can help guide and nurture financial growth, stability and security for some of our Alexandria neighbors. As I see it, this proposal harnesses the specific gifts and talents of the St. Paul’s congregation in addressing a specific need in Alexandria, and is a tangible way to address issues of injustice and inequality in our community. It is one small effort, yet one that can make a significant impact over time. It is a way to invest in the welfare of our community and, because of our interconnection and interdependence, enhances our own.

The Proposal

This proposal has been years in the making. It has taken various twists, turns and forms. It has been shaped by a series of internal and external forces. In the end it represents a personal interest in microeconomics and seeks to apply its basic principles to our local context. St. Paul’s has been involved in several microeconomic projects over the years, most notably, as part of our decades long mission partnership with the Diocese of Renk in South Sudan. As I see it, the incredible success of these microeconomic enterprises in the developing world has essentially three components: 1) Access to much needed capital to start and maintain a small business enterprise (usually very small amounts that are given as low or no interest loans); 2) Intentional education and training (groups formed to share best practices and engage in problem solving); 3) Mutual support and accountability (groups meet regularly and are deeply interconnected - making, or not making, payments on an individual loan directly impacts the livelihood of other group members). Relationships are key to success and the results are often transformational for individuals, for families, and for whole communities.

- ACCESS TO CAPITAL** Access to much needed capital to start and maintain a small business enterprise (usually very small amounts that are given as low or no interest loans).
- EDUCATION AND TRAINING** Intentional education and training (groups formed to share best practices and engage in problem solving).
- SUPPORT ACCOUNTABILITY** Mutual support and accountability (groups meet regularly and are deeply interconnected - making, or not making, payments on an individual loan directly impacts the livelihood of other group members). Relationships are key to success and the results are often transformational for individuals, for families, and for whole communities.

Some of our neighbors that we have met through the Lazarus Ministry, though certainly not all, are small business entrepreneurs, much like those described above. Most are from communities of color, some are first and second generation Americans, and almost to a person, they share both the dream and the drive to work for financial stability. It is often the lack of access to capital, lack of knowledge and experience, and lack of support and accountability that stands in the way of success. **St. Paul’s is uniquely positioned to address all three of these issues in substantive and significant ways. This proposal reflects the intersection of perceived community need and matching parish gifts.**



I am calling this proposal an investment in restorative economics in Alexandria. I realize at the outset that this is a misnomer. To restore something means that there was once a time when the conditions to be addressed did not exist, which, of course, is not the case in this instance. Rather than using this term to reflect an historical or earthly reality, I use it to point to an aspirational and transcendent one. I use it to point to the divine vision of who and how we were created to be, a people made in God's image and reflective of the values of God's reign which most certainly include, equity, justice, compassion and reconciliation. The restoration we seek is the recovery of a fallen people in a fallen world; the work that was begun and moves toward completion in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; the work to which we are summoned as his followers. This proposal represents a small, yet tangible means, to that end.

Outline of the program - St. Paul's Small Business Loan Fund

I have local entrepreneur, founder and CEO of Village Capital, Ross Baird, to thank for this idea. He is the one who helped me to think about how to take what we have learned about microeconomics in the developing world and apply it to our local context. Here is a basic outline of the program:



We start with a partnership with a strong, proven non-profit that is active in the microloan lending space. Determine the best way to get loans to otherwise unserved Alexandrians. Loan size will range from \$500-\$5,000 to start. We invite/recruit local Alexandria small business entrepreneurs to apply to be part of the program. Our community will serve as a base for networking introductions and tying Alexandria into a network of support.



Education will be an important part of the support. We will look to the non-profit to see where the parish can add expertise. This program will include topics such as: Developing a Business Plan; Applying for a Loan and Approaching Local Lending Institutions; Business Accounting and Bookkeeping; Business Taxes; Marketing, Websites and Social Media; Insurance; Human Resources/Employees; etc.



Attention will be paid to developing relationships with and among participants for networking and support. The parish will be made aware of and encouraged to support the businesses of participants

Ideally, the inaugural program would begin in the Fall of 2021 and be run at least twice a year. Eventually (hopefully) be a growing, expanding, revolving loan fund that St. Paul's can support in many ways. Engaging more parishioners in outreach will build valuable resources for the Alexandria community and rewards can not be underestimated.

**Feedback? Questions? Interested in supporting the project?
Please contact Oran@stpaulsalexandria.com**



St. Paul's and Live Streaming

Reaching out to a wider audience

BY ALYSE VIGGIANO

Over the course of the pandemic, the technology and software utilized by St. Paul's made possible what we thought was impossible and was capable of more than we can ask for or even imagine.

Initially, the understanding of pre-recording and now live streaming the service was to provide an alternate option for those who could not attend worship due to the pandemic, but it has become much more than that. It's now a lifeline to so many who may never walk through our doors, and a tool for evangelism.

We've received emails from parishioners near and far that offered support and encouragement, but most importantly expressed how critical the virtual service had become to their faith. From 7,000 miles away in South Korea, a family from St. Paul's was able to worship on Sunday since we pre-recorded the service. Another woman in Utah, who's parish was just distributing the Sunday sermon, found St. Paul's virtual service to be a fuller experience and the connection to God she was yearning for.



St. Paul's Parishioners worshipping via virtual service all the way from South Korea

During the Spring and Summer of 2021, we heard time and again the same incredible experience from newcomers to St. Paul's. Searching for a church home to worship with during the height of the pandemic, they found St. Paul's online service, experienced a connection, and started to "tune-in" weekly. Then when the ability to attend worship in person started, they showed up to the physical building for the first time, EVER, and felt that same connection within the physical space.

Today, any individual seeking a connection to God is able to get a taste of St. Paul's from the comfort of their home. So what was intended as another option for worship has become a tool for evangelism.

Those who were already connected to St. Paul's prior to the pandemic, shared their support and encouragement throughout the pandemic beginning with the pre-recorded service as well as in the transition to live streaming. Live streaming comes with its own complications, but we are working on upgrading St. Paul's internet to continue to improve and ensure the live stream experience will remain consistent and a reliable option for all those seeking a connection to God.

UPGRADING THE WIFI

The St. Paul's Live Stream service has its perks and its difficulties. Transitioning from a pre-recorded service to recording and streaming live, we've learned a lot about the internet and it's inner workings. The number one takeaway is that not all internet is of the same quality and reliability. So St. Paul's is investing in the fiber network for our internet needs. This will not only improve the live stream, but also put us ahead of the curve regarding technological advances. Who knows, maybe we'll be able to turn Oran into a hologram so he'll be preaching in your living rooms one day!?

Angel Tree Program

BY CATHY SACHS



For many years now during the Christmas season at St. Paul's the Angel Tree program shifts into gear to provide Christmas gifts for approximately 180 recipients, individuals as well as families, whose names are provided to us by the City of Alexandria's DCHS. The parish community always comes together to choose recipients of their special gifts, and the pre-school children also get into the spirit by heading up a drive for toiletries and school supplies. What generosity is shown each year.

In 2020 these traditions had to cease due to Covid, and once again this year the gifts from St. Paul's Angel Tree program will be, by necessity, in the form of gift cards, rather than tangible presents. In 2020 Liza May continued to lead and adapt the Angel Tree program despite these changes, but this year she has decided to finally "retire". Oh my goodness, what a leader she has been for 16 or more years! As a member of the Team for most of these 16 years, I can attest to the inspiration of this remarkable woman. All of us on the Team have so loved and admired how Liza has grown the program over the years. Behind the scenes, over a series of weeks, lists had to be gathered, re-written, fine-tuned by Liza, with specific tasks accomplished before the big two week push to complete the program. When we finally all did get together for those last weeks, it was always a time of smiles and catch-up talk. A crazy but happy time for the team for sure. As former associate rector, Judith Proctor, used to say as she passed by the corridor where we all beavered away squished together, "I can hear those angel wings flapping."

Liza possesses such tremendous organizing skills, which over the years were perfected until the Angel Tree program became a well-oiled machine. Every year she would find ways to simplify and streamline tasks, to make it easier for us all. Schedules were created and volunteers corralled. And indeed many of us were given the same roles each year, which again made for a better run program, as we swung into action doing what we knew needed to be done:

checking in the donated gifts; shopping; buying bikes (and sometimes assembling them); wrapping; more shopping to fill in gaps; more wrapping, figuring out where to put those bikes for the duration (!). The final assembly of wrapped gifts would be organized by family grouping, and hauled down to the lobby where they were meticulously loaded by number into a box truck and flatbed, generously loaned by Precision Doors, (as well as their wonderful drivers), and finally delivered to the offices of DCHS. It was exhausting but a time of such great achievement and happiness.

Liza has reckoned that over the years St. Paul's incredibly generous parishioners have provided gifts for more than 2,000 individuals. But through it all she made sure that every recipient of this Christmas cheer was a human being and not just a number on the social services' list. She called them by name, and by the end of our time working on the program, we knew them too. She made sure that the moms got a little something extra in their bag, the child had some fun items in addition to coats and hats, that every child had at least one book as well as school supplies, the senior some special toiletries and cookies.

When the Angel Tree program was expanded to include some students from T.C. Williams (whoops: Alexandria High School), their needs were anticipated and provided for. And through it all, together with the attention to detail, was her desire to make the gifts as attractive as possible, with specially chosen wrapping paper. As another team member has remarked, it was a well-oiled machine, but one with a big heart!

Whether as a recipient of our Angel Tree program, or as part of the team, we have all benefited from Liza's indomitable energy, love, joy and sense of philanthropy. We all wish her the very best. As another team member wrote "thank you, dear friend, and good luck with all that you do in the future. I am sure it will be special". Amen to that.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church Vestry Resolution in Thanksgiving for the Leadership of Liza May in support of the St. Paul's Angel Tree Program

Whereas, for nearly two decades, Liza May has faithfully led the St. Paul's Angel Tree Program, which seeks to serve our Alexandria neighbors in need during the Christmas season;

And whereas, this active expression of the true meaning of this holiday has not only served the Alexandria community but has also enlivened the faith and engagement of the parish community;

And whereas, she has led this effort, and her devoted Angel Team with legendary organizational skill, utter dedication, and with grace and good humor;

Therefore let it be resolved that the Vestry of St. Paul's on this day, Monday the Sixteenth day of August in the Year of our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-One, on behalf of the parish of St. Paul's, offers our deepest gratitude and thanks to God for the ministry of Liza May and makes this action a part of the permanent Vestry minutes and archival record.

The Rev. Oran Warder
Rector

Anne Ayres
Senior Warden



2021 ANGEL TREE AT HOME NOVEMBER 1ST-19TH

We will once again be working in collaboration with the Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) as well as the Lazarus Ministry at St. Paul's to help serve families in need in the city of Alexandria. DCHS has decided that they will once again ask donors like St. Paul's to provide gift cards.

STAY TUNED FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP!

ST. PAUL'S FOUNDATION

As life at St. Paul's slowly returns to normal-- people return to worship on Sundays and we slowly begin programming in the fall, you may not notice the maintenance work that has taken place while the church remained mostly uninhabited. Much of this work is funded by the St. Paul's Foundation, the endowment fund of St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

Each fall the Foundation approves maintenance projects to fund for the upcoming calendar year. In 2020 the Foundation fully funded the Norton Roof repair, a \$189,000 project. In 2021, the Foundation took on the Norton Hall gutter replacement and the Wilmer Hall roof repair, projects totaling over \$100,000. In addition to these projects the Foundation contributes \$40,000 annually to support the maintenance line item of the Operating Fund budget. And, in 2021, the Foundation completed the decade-long stained glass restoration project (you can read more below), a \$325,000 project restoring all 32 windows in the sanctuary. The financial support and proactive leadership of the St. Paul's Foundation is vital as it allows more funds in the Operating budget to be directed towards the mission and ministries at St. Paul's.

At the end of the 2nd quarter of 2021 the endowment fund stands at \$5,608,565. At the beginning of June \$525,666 was transferred to the endowment after the sale of the historic tax credits. As you will recall the 2019 HVAC project enabled St. Paul's to qualify for tax credits and because as a church St. Paul's does not pay state taxes, we were able to sell these credits to an investor. After parish approval of the

process in the fall of 2020, the credits were issued at the close of 2020 and \$525,666 was added to the parish endowment. As of the printing of this magazine, the LLCs created to enable the sale of the tax credits have completed their purpose. This process, led by the St. Paul's treasurer Larry Campbell, was long and arduous and we are so grateful for the time spent on this most fruitful endeavor.

The Foundation continues to put funds aside in a maintenance sinking fund in anticipation of larger maintenance projects. One such project has recently arisen as temperatures in the church office reached near 90 degrees this summer. Yet another HVAC system will need to be replaced, this time in Wilmer Hall. The work, slated to begin in October, will fully replace the current HVAC system and will put the entire St. Paul's campus on the same grid. This will make monitoring temperatures throughout all the buildings a much easier task. This project will be fully funded by the St. Paul's Foundation.

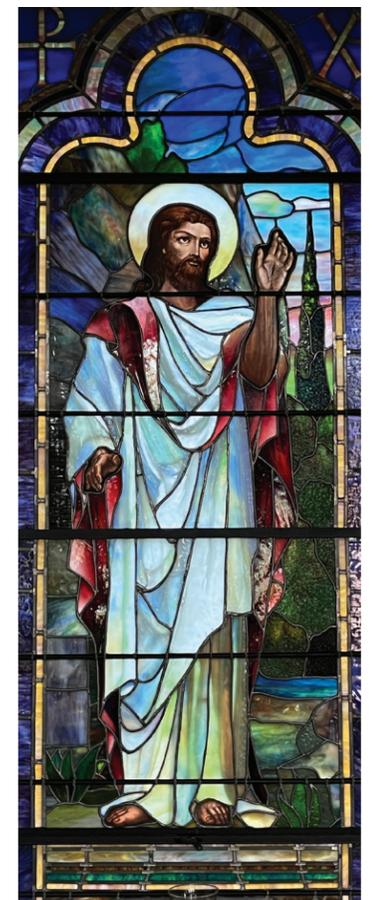
We welcome your gifts and support as we continue to guide the Foundation into the future. The Foundation grows in three ways: gifts made in thanksgiving or memory of loved ones, market appreciation, and legacies and bequests. The Covenant Circle, St. Paul's legacy society, acknowledges members who have included St. Paul's in their estate planning. Established in 2001, the Covenant Society has grown to over 87 members. If you are interested in learning more about the St. Paul's Foundation or the Covenant Society, please contact Maria Halloran, Director of Stewardship, at stewardship@stpaulsalexandria.com.



ST. PAUL'S WINDOW RESTORATION

In 2010 the St. Paul's Foundation began a project to restore the 34 windows in the sanctuary of St. Paul's. Most pre-date the twentieth century and at the time the project started, all but three suffered from structural damage, bulging and breakage of glass due to age and extreme moisture and heat, and failure of the lead that holds the glass together. The Foundation selected Raynal Studios, a renowned stained glass conservation studio in Natural Bridge, Virginia to complete the restoration work.

This July the last 4 balcony windows were returned, marking the end of the project. The decade-long work cost over \$320,000 and was made possible by donations from parishioners, family members of deceased parishioners, and donations from the St. Paul's Foundation. These beautiful windows link us to our past and the saints who came before. They vary in style from the medieval mosaics on the north side of the nave to the abstract symbolism of the contemporary chapel window. They tell the story of God's love and our redemption through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. They remind us of our material heritage in our beautiful buildings and grounds, but also of our spiritual heritage, as children of God.



Music at St. Paul's

BY ERIC SCHNOBRICK



Ten years ago next month, I started attending St. Paul's. One of the first things that struck me on that visit was the beauty of the sanctuary. The space was bright and inviting, the sound was sweet and resonant, and the music seemed at home. I joined the choir soon after and got to know the depth and breadth of the musical culture of this congregation. Among the professional musicians, the talented amateurs, and the enthusiastic listeners there is a shared appreciation and knowledge of the arts that is rather special.

It seemed natural that over the years St. Paul's should open its doors when a neighbor was looking for a place to perform and share their art. Whether it was the Alexandria Symphony performing Bach's Brandenburg Concertos, a solo harpist celebrating First Night, or the Serenade! Choral Festival presenting singers from all over the world, music has continued to feel at home in our space.

And now, with the encouragement and support of our rector and vestry, we are proud to announce a series of concerts from two major ensembles new to St. Paul's. An internationally recognized Baroque orchestra and chorus, The Washington Bach Consort has been a beloved mainstay of the classical music world of DC for over four decades. St. Paul's will be the Northern Virginia home of the Consort's chamber series for the entire 2021-2022 season. Additionally, we will host a concert in February by The Thirteen: an incredibly exciting professional choir whose recordings and performances are setting standards both for their musicality and for their creative approaches to programming choral music.

I cannot tell you all how excited I am to be able to hear musicians of this exceptionally high caliber in our lovely sanctuary. It is my great hope that many of



you join me there and make our new friends feel most welcome among us. Who knows how many of them we may then see again on a Sunday morning?

And in case it seems that our musical focus is all outward facing, I am happy to report that by the time you read this, work on the organ will have been completed and we will have chosen a new organist to play it! While major work was completed on the organ's pipes and other components in recent years, this project has been focused on the electronics in the console.



The many different tone colors and dynamics of an organ are achieved largely by turning different combinations of ranks of pipes on and off, so that they will or will not sound when a key is depressed to play a note. These combinations of "on" pipes, or registrations, are preset by the organist and stored in a memory system controlled by a simple series of buttons on the console. This allows the organist to play through an entire service or concert while changing the tone of the organ with a single thumb (or toe!) as they play. The last major upgrade to this system was almost three decades old and had become increasingly unreliable.

As I write this, the entire console has been taken apart. The keys and all of the buttons are currently in the workshop of our expert organ technician, Eliot Freese. He is rewiring all of the keys and switches to operate through a new solid-state memory system that will be bigger, quicker, and more dependable. It is a necessary tune-up that will allow our new organist to take full advantage of this instrument that has been so lovingly cared for over the years.

This is a very exciting time for music at St. Paul's!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR CONCERTS AT ST. PAUL'S!



THE WASHINGTON BACH CONSORT
OCTOBER 16, 2021 8PM
NOVEMBER 20, 2021 8PM
FEBRUARY 26, 2022 8PM
APRIL 2, 2022 8PM

Visit bachconsort.org for more information

13TH THE THIRTEEN
THE THIRTEEN CHOIR
FEBRUARY 11, 2022
7:30PM

Visit thethirteenchoir.org for more information

SAVE THE date

Sunday, September 26th
A Celebration of
Grant Hellmers



Join us to celebrate the ministry of Grant Hellmers, former Organist and Choirmaster who retired last year. There will be a musical celebration in the Church at 10 am, a Festival Eucharist at 11 am, and reception at Noon in the Courtyard.

ST. PAUL'S PEOPLE WILL COME



BY MARIA HALLORAN

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

1 Corinthians 13: 4-8

The theme for our Fall Stewardship campaign was intended to be centered around the celebratory return to normal life in 2022. Early thoughts and planning all focused on our triumph over COVID-19 and our anticipated resumption of past activities. And while there is much to celebrate about our victory in the pandemic battle, the war seems far from over. We find ourselves in the difficult position of making plans for events we aren't sure are going to happen and if they do happen will people come? Will people even come back to church?

These musings along with summer thoughts of corn and baseball led me to revisit the 1989 movie *Field of Dreams*. The movie is about a farmer, Ray Kinsella, who lives on a cornfield in Iowa with his wife and daughter. After hearing voices from his cornfield whispering "If you build it, they will come", Ray sees a vision of a baseball diamond in the cornfield and the great "Shoeless" Joe Jackson standing in the middle. He decides to plow under part of their corn crop to build a baseball field, at risk of financial hardship. As Ray grapples with whether or not to sell his land he is encouraged by Terrance Mann, an author, who delivers a powerful speech encouraging Ray to keep the baseball field -- assuring him that "people will come".

"...people will come, Ray. They'll come to Iowa for reasons they can't even fathom. They'll turn up your driveway not knowing for sure why they're doing it. They'll arrive at your door as innocent as children, longing for the past....And they'll walk out to the bleachers; sit in shirtsleeves on a perfect afternoon. They'll find they have reserved seats somewhere along one of the baselines, where they sat when they were children and cheered their heroes. And they'll watch the game and it'll be as if they dipped themselves in magic waters. The memories will be so thick they'll have to brush them away from their faces."

Maybe I've been working at St. Paul's too long, but I immediately thought of our church. These days when I walk through the empty parish on a Tuesday morning I can almost hear the whisper myself, "people will come". I think of the joyous return we had this past spring and how returning to the pew, and sitting with my family on a perfect morning did indeed feel almost like being "dipped in magic waters". And I too experienced "memories so thick they

[had to be brushed] away from [my face]". Sitting in church again I was reminded that the love of Christ endures all things.

This fall we will ask you to consider making a financial gift to support the mission and ministry of St. Paul's in the year 2022. Though plans remain uncertain and returning to "normal" seems a far off goal, the work of St. Paul's continues. Our mission to shine as a light in the world to the Glory of God endures even as it takes on new forms. The clergy and staff of St. Paul's continue to work to find new ways to connect the people of St. Paul's to one another and to the community. None of this is possible without your support.

With apologies to screenwriter Phil Alden Robinson I offer you a slight adaptation of the closing lines of Terrance Mann's speech:

"The one constant through all the years has been this church. America has rolled by like an army of steamrollers. It has been erased like a blackboard, rebuilt and erased again. But the church has marked the time. This place; St. Paul's; it's a part of our past. It reminds us of all that once was good and will be again. Oh... people will come to St. Paul's. People will most definitely come."



SEPTEMBER

Sunday Funday!

School Celebration Sunday! Join us at 10:00 in the courtyard for a backpack blessing and back-to-school celebration.

9.19.21

Celebrate Grant Hellmers

Musical celebration in the Church at 10 am, a Festival Eucharist at 11 with a reception following.

9.26.21

OCTOBER

Meet the Parish Staff

There are new faces in the St. Paul's office. Come meet new parish staff members.

10.3.21

Blessing of the Animals

Come to the courtyard at 4:00 pm and bring your pet for its annual blessing.

10.3.21

The Bishop Mark Dyer Lecture

The annual Bishop Mark Dyer Lecture will be given at 10:00 am by the Very Rev. Dr. William S. Safford.

10.10.21

Owning our Faith: Discipleship 101- Session 1

The first session of a 5-part series which explores our Christian faith.

10.17.21

Owning our Faith: Discipleship 101 - Session 2

Part 2 of a 5-part series which explores our Christian faith.

10.24.21

Sunday Funday

All Saints Eve Intergenerational Event - come dressed as your favorite saint and take part in a scavenger Hunt all around the church

10.31.21

NOVEMBER

Owning our Faith: Discipleship 101 - Sessions 3-5

Parts 3 through 5 of a 5-part series which explores our Christian faith.

11.7.21

11.14.21

11.21.21

Sunday Funday - Advent 1

Getting Ready for Advent Intergenerational Event - wreath making. Service of Hymns and Graces at 9 & 11

11.28.21

DECEMBER

Deck the Halls

"Trim the hearth and set the table...Love, the guest, is on the way". An advent flower arranging workshop that seeks to answer the question, why do we deck the halls in the first place?

12.5.21

Advent and Christmas Carols Sing-a-long

12.12.21

Sunday Funday - Christmas Paegant

12.19.21

Christmas Pageant 9 am, a celebration at 10 am and Advent Lessons and Carols at 11 am.

Please note the events listed above are scheduled as of August 30, 2021. Any event is subject to change if CDC and Diocesan guidelines regarding in-person gatherings are altered.

FALL EVENT SCHEDULE

ST. PAUL'S EVENTS SEPTEMBER THROUGH DECEMBER





St. Paul's Episcopal Church
228 South Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

RETURN SERVICE REQUEST



SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Fall 2021 Service Schedule Begins Sunday, September 19

All of St. Paul's worship services are "family services"; people of all ages and stages are welcome at any of our services.

- 8:00 am**   A traditional (Rite I) service of Holy Eucharist with no music.
- 9:00 am**   A contemporary (Rite II) service of Holy Eucharist with the Damascus Road Dogs Band. This 45-minute service has a culture of high tolerance for noise and activity and children are invited and encouraged to remain in the church for the entirety of the liturgy.
- 10:00 am**   Christian Formation for All: Sunday School and Adult Forum hour
- 11:00 am**   A contemporary (Rite II) service of Holy Eucharist with organ. Children are invited to attend Children's Chapel in the parish hall for part of the liturgy.
- 5:00 pm**   A contemplative service of Holy Eucharist with candle lighting, healing prayers, and contemplative music.

A Note: The Saturday Faith@5 service will remain on hiatus for the remainder of 2021. This service may return, and perhaps in a reimagined form, in January 2022.

The nursery will remain closed this fall as we continue to monitor the transmission rate of COVID in our area.

www.stpaulsalexandria.com