

The
EPISTLE

Advent 2022

SHINE

for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.



CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 A LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Faith, Love and Hope in the Waiting

4 ST. PAUL'S THIS FALL

Pictures from life at and around St. Paul's this fall.

6 OUTREACH AT ST. PAUL'S

The Damascus Project, Pennies from Heaven, and the Lazarus Ministry

8 ST. PAUL'S ON THE MOVE

News of St. Paul's beyond 228 S. Pitt Street.

10 FROM THE ARCHIVES

St. Paul's and the Alexandria Hospital

12 MAGICAL THREADS AND TALKING BRANCHES

Getting Ready for the Jesse Tree

14 THE SAINT PAUL'S GIFT GUIDE

16 MUSIC

Singing at St. Paul's

18 ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL PRESCHOOL

20 CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND YOUTH

22 THE ST. PAUL'S FOUNDATION

Staff and Church Leadership

CLERGY

The Rev. Oran E. Warder
Rector

The Rev. Jenni Ovenstone
Senior Associate Rector

The Rev. Alyse E. Viggiano
Associate Rector

STAFF

Maria Halloran
*Director of Stewardship/
Chief Administrator*

Eric Schnobrick
Director of Music

Adriano Spampinato
Organist in Residence

Lillian Hardaway
*Minister of Youth, Children, and
Families*

Katie Woodruff
Director of Operations

Laura Simmons
*Administrator for Lazarus
Ministry*

Lorraine Partee
Events Coordinator

Laura Rose
Membership

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL PRESCHOOL

Kristin Teeters
Head of School

Candi Sparrow
Preschool Manager

SPEP SCHOOL BOARD

Andrew Lund (*Chair*)
Cari Steiner (*Vice-Chair*)
Michelle Lane (*Secretary*)
Wesley Schmidt (*Treasurer*)
Don Lefevé
Nicole Morrell
Jenni Ovenstone
Teresa Taylor
Kristin Teeters

VESTRY

Jim Kahl
Senior Warden

Lisa Eskew
Junior Warden

Larry Campbell
Parish Treasurer

Wesley Schmidt
Assistant Treasurer

Julian Burke
At-Large Officer

Cindy Brack
Register

Andrew Blair
Dale Cloyd
Talley Fulghum
Steve Francis
Karen Grane
Bruce Hedman
Carol Kaufmann
Andrew Lund
Anthony Marasco
Lesley Markham
Jim Morrell
Dede Stanko
Teresa Taylor
Ann Webb

ST. PAUL'S FOUNDATION

John Siegel
President

Joseph Thomas
Treasurer

Suzanne Brock
Secretary

Tim Adams
David Ayres
Tim Belevetz
John Keppler
Sarah Knutson
Dawn Stump

A Letter from the Rector

Faith, Love and Hope in the Waiting



The Rev. Oran E. Warder

I said to my soul, be still, and wait without hope
For hope would be hope for the wrong thing; wait without love,
For love would be love of the wrong thing; there is yet faith
But the faith and the love and the hope are all in the waiting

East Coker, (26-29), T. S. Eliot

Dear People of St. Paul's:

These lines from T.S. Eliot's poem *East Coker*, the second poem from his famous *Four Quartets*, were written in an effort to keep hope alive in the midst of the horrors of World War II. One of his friends and contemporaries called the poem, *a love-letter from God*.¹ Eliot's deep Christian faith led him to believe in both the ultimate love and goodness of God as well as a common humanity that has yet to be fully realized. He believed these things in a time when neither was readily tangible or apparent. We inhabit a world that still struggles to recognize these two realities. By the time you are reading this edition of the Epistle Magazine the midterm elections in our polarized nation will have happened, war will still be raging in Ukraine as the cold and darkness of winter approaches, fears of global recession will continue to grow, and we will still be grappling with a post-pandemic malaise and uncertainty about the future. It is into this world that Jesus has come and continues to come. This is the message of the season.

It is in Jesus that the fullness of God and the fullness of our humanity come together. In his first coming, Jesus, a defenseless and utterly vulnerable child, reveals to us the true nature of God - a God of love. At his second coming, he will triumphantly complete the new creation, usher in a just and fully reconciled society, and bring full redemption to our fallen world. We, who live between these two Advents of Christ, are called to recognize the reign of God that Jesus has begun and to work toward its completion at the close of the age.

In this in-between time, amidst the harsh realities of our world, when the reign of God seems hidden, or even ignored, our task is to make it known. The way that we at St. Paul's seek to bear witness to God's reign is tangible and readily apparent in the pages of this Epistle Magazine. As we wait, and watch, and pray, for the fulfillment of the Kingdom, we also strive to act in ways that reveal the loving nature of God and highlight our common humanity. We do this through our praise and worship, through our efforts to shape and form disciples, and through our acts of service to those in need around us. This is the season to renew our trust and our commitment to God and our common mission. And although it may seem that Christ's second coming is long delayed, may we be joyfully reminded that the faith and the love and the hope are all in the waiting.

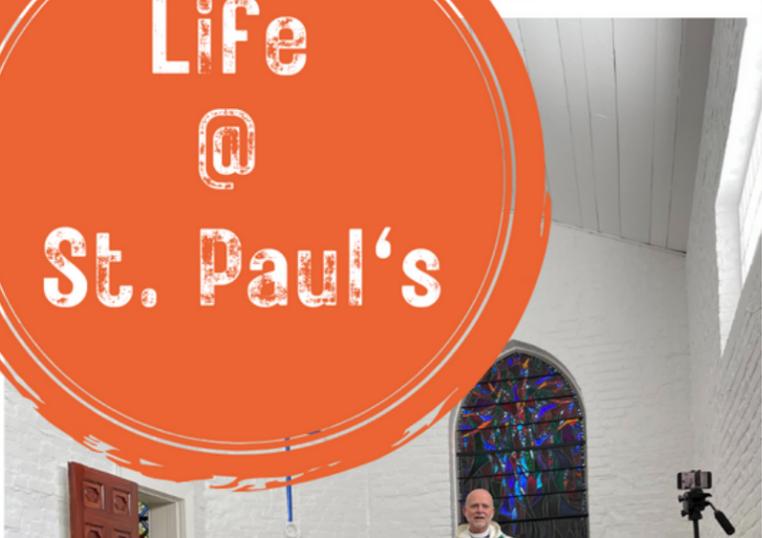
A blessed Advent and joyous Christmas to you all.

The Rev. Oran Warder



Cover photo:
Christmas Candle Lighting 2021
Picture taken by Dennis Brack





The Damascus Project

Micro Loans, Macro Transformation



Oran Warder



Officially launched in March of this year, the Damascus Project, the newest outreach project of St. Paul's is off and running. This initiative, based on our own positive experience with micro lending in the developing world, seeks to apply these same principles to our own local context. That is - 1) to help small business owners have access to capital through small business loans; 2) to provide education and training to those who receive those loans; and 3) to provide support and accountability necessary for success. Our partner in this work is the Latino Economic Development Center (LEDC) who already have the experience and expertise in doing this work, but prior to our partnership, they were not operating in Alexandria. Our aim over the next three years is to provide business opportunities and increase financial capability and access to capital for low-to-moderate-income minorities, immigrants, and refugees in the city. The church will utilize LEDC's proven record of successful small business development and its work with underrepresented communities to assist with the ultimate goal of expanding the economic landscape of the City of Alexandria.

We are calling this initiative - The Damascus Project. Micro Loans. Macro Transformation. Named for our patron the Apostle Paul whose conversion and transformation on the Damascus Road set the stage for the transformation of the Church - we hope and pray that the Damascus Project will be a catalyst for the transformation of many lives in Alexandria. We are a people who believe that any time we improve the lives of any in our community we improve the life of the entire community.

This past summer we were pleased to have our first intern to assist with the implementation of this project. Lifelong St. Paul's parishioner and University of Virginia student, Bo Siegel, worked with Sue Setliff to enlarge our community network. Thanks to Bo's work, we are now connected with other local nonprofits who are engaged in similar work and those already serving the population that we also seek to serve. Bo's enthusiasm was unmatched. He deepened our connections with Casa Chirilagua, La Cocina, and Community Lodgings. Bo attended the North Old Town Farmers Market at the invitation of parishioner Margaret Townsend, and was able to connect a couple of vendors to the LEDC successfully. This kind of relationship building is crucial to our success and we are grateful to Bo for helping to make it happen.

In addition, our first cohorts of entrepreneurs have begun their training and small business development course. Earlier this month I was honored to be asked to serve as a "judge" for a Bootcamp Pitch Event. This event was designed to give our aspiring entrepreneurs an opportunity to pitch their business ideas and receive constructive feedback as they continue to plan and eventually launch their own businesses. Please stay tuned for ways that you can support this effort, either by supporting these new businesses or by offering your own expertise and experience. And please continue to pray for this new ministry of St. Paul's.



Pennies from Heaven

St. Paul's will once again be giving its support to the Renk Basic School in South Sudan. Each summer, usually in July, parishioners donate to the Pennies from Heaven scholarship fund. This summer our ministry partners in Renk announced the start of a new program, the Pennies From Heaven Street Children Project. This exciting new initiative is reaching out to orphaned and homeless children in the city of Renk. With seven staff members, this program seeks to give food, school fees, rehabilitation, and counseling to the most vulnerable children in Renk County.

St. Paul's will donate \$25,000 to the school and new street children project and will raise funds for 2023 next summer. We have also reintroduced our 9 AM Sunday School offering which all goes to support the Pennies from Heaven Fund. We are proud of our decades long partnership with the Diocese of Renk in South Sudan and look forward to more opportunities to expand our connection to our brothers and sisters across the globe.

St. Paul's Outreach Ministries



The Lazarus Ministry

Upcoming Transition

I am sad to announce that after 7 years as the Director of the St. Paul's Lazarus Ministry, Laura Simmons has decided to step down at the end of this year. Her steady, faithful and dedicated leadership of this flagship ministry of the parish has been unprecedented in so many ways. Laura has expanded both the resources available and the scope of this ministry, serving more people than we ever imagined possible. Guiding this ministry through the many challenges of the pandemic, perhaps when it was needed most, required a deftness and creativity that Laura ably offered with great grace and compassion. With volunteers and clients unable to meet, phone calls, emails and expanded days and hours, replaced the Tuesday morning on-site visits. These efforts help to keep many of our Alexandria neighbors safe and housed in this difficult chapter of our common life. And the work continues, even as the ministry seeks to return to a more normal pace.



The search for a new director continues and an announcement will be made once a call is issued and accepted. In the meantime I invite you to reach out to Laura to thank her for her ministry among and for us at St. Paul's. And do mark your calendars for Thursday, December 8. This is the date of the next Lazarus Ministry Friendraiser, and back by popular demand, it will be another virtual beer tasting with Laura Simmons as our honored guest. Please join us to celebrate Laura and continue our support for this incredible ministry of the parish.

We're Back!

Laura Simmons



After almost three challenging years of work-from-home, the Lazarus Ministry resumed in-person financial assistance on Tuesday mornings this fall. Due to the large volume of people needing financial help in the City, we have started seeing clients by appointment only. We are back to helping with rent, eviction prevention, security deposits, utilities and medical bills. We are also back to providing food bags - a definite bonus to the in-person experience.

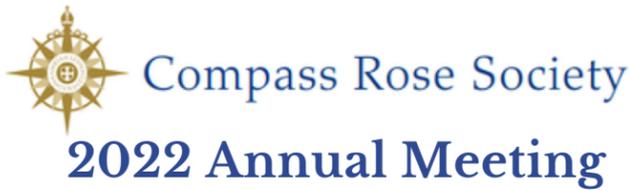
We will be looking at adding an evening in-person time to better serve clients who are working full time. This group of people lost jobs during the pandemic and are finally back at work, but still owe back rent and have lots of bills from two years of unemployment. Taking time out Tuesday mornings to meet with us puts their jobs at risk. We are looking at ways we can best accommodate them going forward.

It's so much nicer to be back to seeing people in person, and dare we say it - normal. Clients feel more listened to and cared about when we are able to see them in person. They also walk out knowing exactly how we will help them, so it is much more efficient and smoother for them. Our volunteers are enjoying meeting with clients and seeing each other again. Although we are focused on helping people in serious situations, there is still a lot of laughter and lightness in Norton on Tuesday mornings. As one of our long-term volunteers once told me, "I think I get more out of this than the people coming in for help."

Your donations enable the Lazarus Ministry to assist our neighbors in need as they struggle to recover after the pandemic. As other relief and assistance programs expire, the need in the city of Alexandria continues to grow. You can donate online at stpaulsalexandria.com/lazarus-ministry.

St. Paul's On the Move

Travels Beyond 228 South Pitt Street



Founded in 1994 after a visit to the war ravaged Province of Sudan, which was largely forgotten by the media and the world, Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, returned to England with a vision to establish the Compass Rose Society. The mission of this society would be to provide Archbishop Carey and subsequent Archbishops of Canterbury the financial resource to assist part of the church in dire need and at the same time building unity within the entire Anglican Communion.



Most of the St. Paul's Delegation to the Compass Rose Annual Meeting



Oran Wardner with Martin Matsui, Representative for Hong Kong

Since that time the society has raised over \$12 million in support of the global mission of the church. St. Paul's became a parish member of the society in 2013 and subsequently 15 members of the congregation have become individual members. After two years of virtual gatherings due to the pandemic, this year's annual meeting was held in London and in Canterbury and St. Paul's had the largest delegation in attendance.

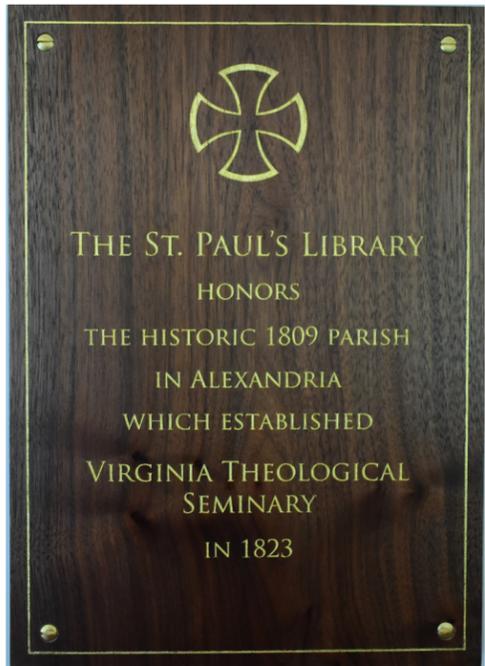
The Annual meetings consist of an overview of the state of the Anglican Communion from Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, and the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, the newly appointed Bishop Anthony Poggo, as well as reports from other global partners. This year, the Rev. Dr. Katherine Grieb, Director of the Virginia Seminary Center for Anglican Communion Studies, also addressed the group.

For more information about the work and mission of Compass Rose Society visit the compassrosesociety.org

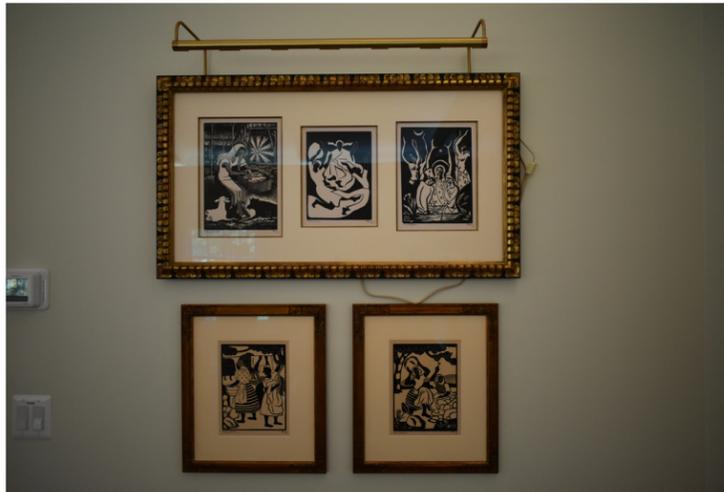


Ann Kavaljain with Archbishop Justin Welby and Mrs. Caroline Welby

St. Paul's Library Dedicated



The first classes of the Virginia Seminary were held at St. Paul's on October 15, 1823. Our second rector, William Holland Wilmer was its first professor. In honor of and in thanksgiving for its role in the founding of the Virginia Theological Seminary, the library in the newly reconstructed and enlarged Deanery was named for St. Paul's. At a recent dedication ceremony parish leaders were present to tour the new facility and give thanks to God for two centuries of partnership in the formation of leaders for the church.



From the Archives...

St. Paul's and the Alexandria Hospital



Corinne Marasco

Throughout 19th century America, crowded cities experienced frequent epidemics of diseases such as cholera, dysentery, and yellow fever, and Alexandria was no exception. A smallpox epidemic in the early 1870s ushered in the adoption of sanitary measures to protect public health and mitigate the spread of disease.¹ The Alexandria Gazette reported stories of sailors who were sick with smallpox being quarantined on ships that were ordered to leave the port of Alexandria so the sailors could be treated elsewhere. Eventually, the board of health in Washington, D.C. refused to accept any more cases of contagious diseases sent from Alexandria. “[I]t would seem part of prudence for the Alexandria Board of Health to at once procure a suitable place for the care of such cases, should any more occur.”² In mid-November 1872, the city had begun construction of a smallpox hospital but more clearly needed to be done.

It was against this backdrop that six women and two men, including St. Paul's rector Rev. George Hatley Norton, met at St. Paul's Lecture Room on December 12, 1872. The purpose was “to establish and control a Hospital for the sick among the respectable laboring classes.”³ The group was headed by Juliana (Julia) Johns, eldest daughter of Bishop John Johns, the fourth bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia



Julia Johns and a team of women opened Alexandria's first permanent hospital in 1872. Photo/The Board of Lady Managers

An able and tireless leader, Julia Johns dedicated her life to caring and compassion for those in need. She was born on January 3, 1822, in Frederick, Md., when her father served as rector of All Saints' Church in Frederick County. The family moved to Baltimore and Williamsburg, where Bishop Johns was president of William & Mary. The family then moved to Alexandria in 1854 after Bishop Johns resigned as president of the university. He had purchased the 57-acre Stump Hill Farm in Fairfax County, near the Seminary, and built the residence later known as Malvern.



According to the minutes of the first meeting,⁴ the first order of business was to elect officers and organize a Board of Managers. Mrs. John Stuart was elected president; Julia Johns, vice president; Col. Arthur Herbert, treasurer; and George R. Hill, secretary. Stuart and Johns, along with nine other women, comprised the first Board of Lady Managers. Dr. Robert C. Powell was elected Surgeon to the Infirmary. Drs. M.M. Lewis and William Gibson became consulting physicians.

An 1820 portrait of John Johns, Episcopal Bishop of the Diocese of Virginia by HagiaSophia1984 licensed under CC BY 4.0

The second meeting took place at St. Paul's Rectory on December 26, 1872. A letter from State Delegate Sidney Chapman Neale announced that a bill to incorporate the Alexandria Infirmary had passed both houses of the state legislature.⁵ The list of trustees in the bill includes recognizable St. Paul's names: James Green, John B. Daingerfield, Arthur Herbert, and Charles R. Hooff. Mrs. Stuart, the president, announced that the Infirmary would open on January 15, 1873, or as early as possible.

The Alexandria Gazette hailed the Infirmary as “an effort on the part of the Christian women of Alexandria which should commend itself to the active sympathy and cheerful support of every good citizen. ... It is a source of congratulation that a work of such importance should have fallen into hands so well known, and so well qualified, whose names are a sufficient guarantee as well for its necessity, as for its thorough and successful management.”⁶

The Infirmary was unable to open its doors on January 15, 1873, due to a shortage of donations. Nor did it open at the home on Duke and St. Asaph Streets, as originally planned. Instead, the Infirmary rented the former home of Dr. Francis Murphy on the corner of Duke and S. Fairfax Streets, just two blocks from St. Paul's. An Alexandria Gazette article described the Infirmary rooms as “furnished neatly and comfortably, and supplied with all the necessary conveniences ...” More importantly, the managers had made arrangements with the government to care for all sailors who arrived at the port and required medical or surgical attention.⁷



Photo/The Board of Lady Managers

As a community institution, the Infirmary relied on financial and material support from Alexandrians. One fundraiser that was instituted was Hospital Sunday, which debuted on the first Sunday in December 1874. Local churches agreed to donate their collections to support the Infirmary. It was the primary appeal for many years.

Julia Johns died of consumption on December 12, 1883, at Malvern, which she had inherited from her father. The Infirmary's 1883 annual report called it an “irreparable loss.” She realized that she needed to step aside from her leadership role because of her failing health: “There was not an interest in the Infirmary that did not occupy her ... Her last written words were: “Let me hear from the Infirmary. I cannot be happy unless I hear daily.”⁸

In her honor, the Board of Trustees voted to rename the Infirmary “The Julia Johns Infirmary of Alexandria.” The Infirmary was renamed “Alexandria Hospital” in 1902. She is buried next to her father at the Virginia Theological Seminary Cemetery. In 1999, a plaque placed by her grave commends her as a “Visionary community pioneer, Extraordinary leader of women, Inspired faithful witness, and Compassionate humanitarian.”

St. Paul's has had longstanding ties to Alexandria Hospital from its inception to present day. The hospital's Nursing School, founded in 1894, held graduation exercises at St. Paul's for many years. The Inova Brock Family Antenatal Testing Center, opened in 1994, is an integral part of Inova Alexandria Hospital Women's Services. Alexandria Hospital dedicated an expanded and upgraded Perinatal Diagnostic Center in 2004, made possible by a gift from Suzanne Brock and family. In 2008, Alexandria Hospital dedicated its newly renovated Neonatal Intensive Care Unit made possible by a \$1 million donation by Anne Beverly and Freeman Jones through the McCormack Foundation. In 2014, the state-of-the-art Inova Alexandria Hospital Women's Tower included the expanded Brock Family Antenatal Testing Center, and the Jones Family Women's Specialty Center, which caters to the unique needs of women undergoing breast and gynecologic procedures.

Interested in learning more?

“Alexandria Hospital: Women Mobilize the Community”, celebrating the 150th anniversary of Alexandria Hospital, is now on display at the Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington Street, Alexandria.

The exhibition is scheduled to run until October 29, 2023.

(1) Krystyn Moon, “A Brief History of Public Health in Alexandria and Alexandria's Health Department” (2014). History and American Studies. 6.

https://scholar.umw.edu/hist_amst/6/

(2) *Alexandria Gazette*, August 7, 1872, 3.

(3) Ruth Lincoln Kaye, *The History of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Virginia*, November 12, 1809—November 12, 1984, 144.

(4) According to Kaye's *History*, the minutes of that meeting were copied by Naomi Simmons Klipstein in January 1942. Prior to her marriage to Dr. George T. Klipstein in 1915, she was the superintendent of Alexandria Hospital.

(5) Virginia, Acts and Joint Resolutions Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Virginia At Its Session of 1872-'73, (United States: n.p., 1873), 7-8.

(6) *Alexandria Gazette*, December 31, 1872, 3. The Hospital was not Julia Johns' sole achievement. In 1869, she organized a successful “Mother's Mission” for poor women at Christ Church. See *Alexandria Gazette*, January 11, 1889, 1.

(7) *Alexandria Gazette*, March 6, 1873, p. 3.

(8) *Alexandria Gazette*, March 3, 1884, 2.

Magical Threads and Talking Branches:

Getting Ready for the Jesse Tree

The Rev. Jenni Oventstone



I do not know much about my family history. What I can fill in on my family tree goes back just one generation beyond those I've known in my own lifetime, mostly deduced from snippets of stories and a few fading photographs my granddad would pull from a special shelf in his closet during some of my favorite childhood visits in Scotland. Whenever he disappeared, whistling and humming while rummaging away in another room, I knew he would return with something magical. The photographs were especially so: I remember holding them carefully, on the edges, between fingers held straight, hardly wanting to breathe on the fragile paper far less smudge away the already-fuzzy images with my fingerprints. Something about the people peering back at me, strangers yet nearly-familiar, made me feel like I was holding, just barely, onto the edge of a thread of mystery about to pull me in. It was as if I could sense that often subconscious stirring our family stories have, down-deep. Our family tree branches speak.

My family stories are relatively small, private, unwritten, unknown, even to me ... yet there is power in them. Perhaps that is why my imagination was so captivated during a retreat a few years ago when the speaker asked us to imagine what it was like for Jesus growing up, knowing that his family stories were... the Bible! That his very-own ancestors peering to him across time were those who you and I often think of as "characters."



Abraham. Joseph. Tamar. Ruth. Jesse ... Luke and Matthew trace Jesus' genealogy back, through each Mary and Joseph, to King David and beyond. Of course, these genealogies are meant to shape the gospel readers' understanding of Jesus and his significance, how to interpret his words and actions. Still, I am struck by the wonder of what it meant for Jesus that, when he read the Scriptures, when he debated and conversed about them with his fellow rabbis, when he heard them proclaimed aloud in worship, he was picturing his "Great-great-great-great..." Jesus was hearing his very own family stories – how did that make him who he was?

This year, on the **Third Sunday of Advent (December 11th)** we will get a glimpse during our 9 am Family Eucharist: as we hear snippets of Scripture stories and children hang hand-made images made representing the "characters" on a tree of bare branches, the Jesse Tree will emerge. It is a visual representation of Jesus' family tree, pointing towards Jesus as the "shoot grow(ing) forth from the Root of Jesse," who Isaiah promised would bring a new kingdom, working always for justice, peace and God's "shalem," the well-being and flourishing of all people, all creation. The Jesse Tree helps us hear the stories of Scripture as a whole, looking back through time through the hope of the Gospel.

The mysterious (and magical) thing is that we will be hearing our own family stories. We will be seeing our own family tree take shape. The promise of Incarnation is that we who follow Jesus have been marked as Christ's own and made children of God. The longing of Advent comes in that the just, peace, creation-flourishing work is not complete; there is work to be done.

Yet the Jesse Tree says there is a thread that runs through it all, running right up to us: Christ's own family. And, given who we are and where we have come from, we are ready for it.



ADVENT SABBATH DAY

12.10.22

December 10th, 8:30 am -12:30 pm at St. Paul's
Facilitated by the Rev. Jenni Oventstone

The festive preparations and events of the season have a way of taking on – and taking over! – a life of their own. Come and carve out time and space for reflection and gentle conversation to re-center. We will be considering "Preparing the House for the Lord" and other poems by Mary Oliver. Oliver's deeply incarnational poetry, drawing readers to discover the sacred in the most ordinary of moments and in the everyday surroundings of creation, will guide us to consider how we can turn our tasks of holiday preparation into the acts of holy anticipation through which welcome Christ this season.

Registration \$10 per person. Please register by December 7th. Nursery care will be available for children, infants through 3 years old. If requesting nursery care, please register by December 1st.



Mark your calendar!

Upcoming Adult Forums this Winter

Oh, Star of Wonder: Exploring Space and Discovering Faith this Epiphany Season
The Rev. Jenni Oventstone

The James Webb Space Telescope was launched last year on Christmas Day, and when the first images were released to the public this past July, it caught our collective imagination. Suddenly social media pages, news feeds, and even the evening news channels seemed to turn attention towards something other than the typical self-focused and self-perpetuating talking points to look ... up! For a moment, if even a brief one, I sensed a collective remembering that, despite the "global" and "unprecedented" we have all trudged our way through for months, our own experiences are part of a vast universe, an awesome and mysterious world. After a long season of so many stresses and strains, it felt like a soul-lifting, wonder-renewing relief.

I was inspired. So, in preparing for our Adult Forum series this year, and looking for speakers and themes to help reawaken tired souls and stir imaginations, I looked to space! During our upcoming Epiphany season – a season of light, a season of discovery, a season that begins with the guiding of a star – St. Paul's will welcome as speakers two bi-vocational clergy persons whose work takes them not only into the life of the church, but into the world of space exploration.

The Rev. Amy Shimonkevitz, joining us on **January 8th**, is an Episcopal deacon currently serving at St. Andrew's in Glenwood, Maryland. A science enthusiast, she has worked for 15 years supporting the work of both Earth and Sun Scientists at the NASA Goddard Flight Center.

The Rev. Pamela (Pan) Conrad, joining us **January 29th**, is Rector of St. Alban's in Glen Burnie, Maryland. Pan is an Episcopal priest and an astrobiologist and planetary scientist specializing in understanding how planets do or do not evolve into habitable environments. Long drawn to the interconnections between God, faith and science, she has worked on multiple NASA projects. She is presently involved in the exploration of Mars with the Perseverance Rover and its companion, the Ingenuity helicopter.

Look for the titles and more details about these upcoming forums are on the **St. Paul's Adult Formation webpage**, and in weekly electronic communications. For more information, please email jenni@stpaulsalexandria.com

The St. Paul's Gift Guide

For the Most Pious on Your List



The Rev. Alyse Viggiano

The countdown has begun...

Perhaps you were able to purchase most of your Christmas gifts Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, Cyber Monday, and Giving Tuesday, but you still have that pesky last gift to shop for. Not to worry, you can cross it off your list because St. Paul's is here for you!

Like God's grace, here is the theological gift guide that you didn't ask for, but is being freely given regardless of whether you recognized you needed it or not.

For the amateur cook that doesn't follow a recipe, but could use a sous chef and pinch of spiritual guidance:

Supper of the Lamb by Robert Farrar Capon



For the home-spa enthusiast that's looking for an all-natural facemask inspired by John the Baptist's lifestyle:

Wild Naturals Face Mask Skin Care – Manuka Honey Face Mask

For the bookworm graphic novel enthusiast who's interested in theology but not seriously:

The Indispensable Calvin and Hobbes (Comic Book) by Bill Watterson

For the fitness junkie who's out of breath by the end of their workout, but still wants to talk about Jesus:

Godspeed Socks

For the technology guru that wants to unplug and brush up on conversation skills to reconnect:

Conversation Menus Cards Set by the School of Life

For the young animal lover who's been caught talking to creatures at recess since being inspired by St. Francis of Assisi:

Carson BugView Magnifier

For the coffee obsessed millennial who only drinks pour overs the meet and right way Jesus did:

A bag of Whole Bean Single Origin Coffee from Swing's Coffee Roasters

For the crafty in-laws who could use a distraction project while staying in your guest room for a week:

1000-piece jigsaw puzzle of the Washington National Cathedral

For the St. Paul's Episcopal Church Alexandria enthusiast:

The SOON-to-be-published biography of The Rev. William Holland Wilmer (rector of St. Paul's from 1812-1826) written by The Rev. Oran Warder



St. Paul's Episcopal Church Advent and Christmas



Please note that in addition to these offerings regular Sunday worship services take place each week at 8 am, 9 am, 11am, and 5pm.

- Nov 27 @ 10 am ADVENT WREATH MAKING
Advent wreath making and hot chocolate. To-go kits also available!
- Nov 30 @ 7:30 pm COMPLINE BY CANDLELIGHT
Wednesdays throughout Advent, experience worship with candle lighting and Taizé music. Save the dates 12/7, 12/14, & 12/21
- Dec 4 @ 10 am DECK THE HALLS
The Rev. Oran Warder will present the theology and Laura Francis, flower designer, will present flower decor and arrangements sure to awe this season.
- Dec 8 @ 6:30 pm WASSAIL! VIRTUAL BEER TASTING
Gather with friends for our annual virtual beer tasting. All proceeds support the Lazarus Ministry.
- Dec 10 @ 8:30 am ADVENT SABBATH DAY
From 8:30 until 12:30, a time and space for reflection and gentle conversation as we prepare for the coming of Christ.
- Dec 11 @ 9am JESSE TREE
A new lessons and carols service for families.
- @ 11 am ADVENT LESSONS & CAROLS
- Dec 18 @ 9 am CHRISTMAS PAGEANT
Our annual retelling of the birth of Jesus. Children can grab a costume and join the lively nativity scene.
- @ 10am CHRISTMAS CAROL SING-ALONG
Treats and Christmas carol sing along!

Christmas Eve Service Times

12:00 pm - Contemplative	6:00 pm & 10:00 pm - Festive Rite II
2:00 pm & 4:00 pm - Family services with special sermon presentation	with choir and candle lighting featuring the Barclay Brass quintet
Nursery care available	

Christmas Day Service

10:00 am* - Rite Two, with organ

First Sunday after Christmas

10:00 am* - Christmas Lessons & Carols

* This is the only service on this day.

St. Paul's Music Ministry

Singing at St. Paul's



Eric Schnobrick

Music is an entirely collaborative art. Orchestras move together. Choirs breathe together. Even a pianist playing a sonata still interacts with the audience or, if alone, at least with the reverberations of the hall in which they are playing. A composer may put the instructions on the page, but music only really exists as it is being heard.

I am sure that this is not the first time I have started an Epistle article talking about what a team sport music is, and I am sure that it will not be the last. It bears repeating. A choir demands the constant commitment and recommitment of the entire ensemble in order to bring music to life. Our St. Paul's Choir has made and continues to make this commitment, and it is a joy to witness. Setting aside a few retirements, the choir has returned to its pre-pandemic force. I am encouraged every week by our growth together and by the dedication to worship that each member brings to their work. And I encourage anybody who is interested in joining us to email me.



There are active members of the St. Paul's Choir who have sung here for decades. The legendary Allen Stuhl sang for half a century. Finding your musical home in a choir, like finding your spiritual home in church (and so much the better if they are in the same place!), brings the potential for a lifetime of meaningful connection and creativity.

Children's choirs are different. And the same. Children's choirs still teach singing and music. They still give context to the liturgical role of leading song and prayer. And the opportunities to become part of a lasting choir family still exist. But children do not stay children very long and, for young boys, the time they have to sing in a treble choir is even shorter. While they will always belong to the community of those singers, their time as an active singer in that ensemble is limited.



Between the time all choirs were suspended in 2020 and when we resumed children's choirs this fall, every child that had been a member of the Angel Choir had aged out. Many St. Cecilia singers have moved on as well. While members of the St. Paul's Choir could wait for things to pass before standing up, knocking off the rust, and coming back to sing, the same was not true for many children and their families.



All of that is to say this. **Angel Choir and St. Cecilia Choir are back!** St Paul's is once again offering opportunities for fun and structured singing for children as young as four years old. The newest class of the youngest singers in our congregation are already rehearsing together, singing together, and leading worship together. And it is not too late to join them.

If you have or know children that might be interested in singing with us, let me know. If you know a child that wanted to join but wasn't sure what to expect, now is a great time to start. If somebody didn't start singing because they were busy playing a sport or were nervous to go first or simply didn't know that this was happening, this is your chance!

And if you are a former St. Cecilia chorister that still wants to sing but feel like your days with St. Cecilia are behind you, I would strongly encourage you to reach out to me about the possibility of joining St. Paul's Choir to sing great choral works every week.

All are welcome!

Reach Eric by email at: music@stpaulsalexandria.com

COMPLINE BY CANDLELIGHT

WEDNESDAYS
AT 7:30 PM

IN THE SANCTUARY

12/7, 12/14, 12/21

Experience God's grace
during a service full of the
enchancing music of Taizé and
candle lighting.

Compline is the final service in the daily office
offering prayers of rest and reassurance
before we fall off to sleep.

During a season of hustle and bustle,
find a place of quiet and contemplation
HERE



St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool

A Busy Fall for SPEP



Kristin Teeters, Head of School

THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING HAPPENING....

Advent; outside of its liturgical meaning, advent, as defined by Merriam-Webster's, is "a coming into being...". At St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool, we are privileged to be a part of children coming into being, each day.

Already our students have grown leaps and bounds, and it's only December! SPEP's play-based program encourages engagement, curiosity, exploration, compassion, and a love of learning. Each child is known, loved, and belongs as they develop to their fullest potential.

From taking a field trip to explore the sights and sounds of nature at Huntley Meadows, or meeting one of Alexandria's community helpers (Specter the K-9 Unit dog), hearing stories about Moses in Chapel, observing chemical reactions in Science, audiating and shaking out the sillies in Music, or discovering a new favorite book at story time, SPEP children are constantly experiencing, learning, and developing through play.

Not only are our children growing, but our SPEP program offerings have also expanded this year. Now in our 3rd year, SPEP offers for the first time an afternoon option for our Kindergarten students. Three afternoons a week our oldest students can extend their learning with varied monthly units (Bats, Nursery Rhymes, Rain Forest - to name a few) supported by literacy, numeracy, and art activities.



WHAT ELSE IS NEW AT ST. PAUL'S?

Early Care is now available for families; our bus driver, Mr. Dawit, was honored this fall with MAESA's Stewardship Award for his dedicated service; our first ever in-person book fair was a great success, bringing many new books onto our library shelves; and SPEP's debut in Alexandria's Scottish Walk Parade is another first.

Things are always happening at SPEP! Come by and take a look for yourself and witness first-hand how our students are growing, and coming into being, all through play!



AT ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL PRESCHOOL!



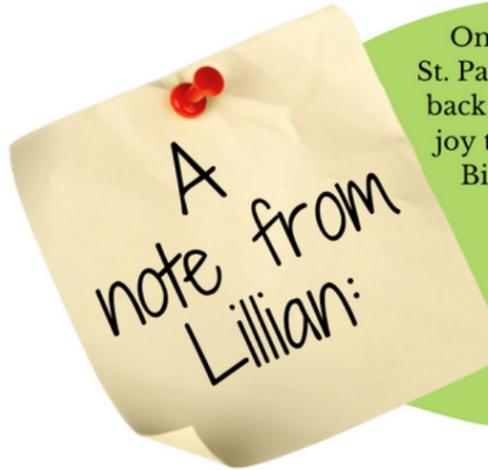
St. Paul's Children, Youth, and Families

Fall Recap



Lillian Hardaway

On August 1, 2022, I celebrated my one year anniversary of serving at St. Paul's! It was an incredible first year full of meeting people and bringing back programs that had not happened since before the pandemic. It was a joy to bring back the Christmas Pageant in December 2021 and Vacation Bible School in June 2022. It was an honor to help youth prepare for Confirmation, some that have been waiting for several years! My first year at St. Paul's brought many blessings and challenges, and I am excited for all that my second year has already brought and will continue to bring: growing programs, creating more for families to do together, re-opening the St. Paul's Nursery (re-opened in September 2022), and most importantly; growing closer in community and to God.



NURSERY & SUNDAY SCHOOL

The St. Paul's nursery was reopened in September 2022 and we are so excited to have Sean and LaTaya on our nursery team! The nursery is open each Sunday from 8:45am - 12:15pm.



The Second Floor of Wilmer Hall is always lively on Sunday mornings as kids ages 4 years old through 5th grade gather to play games, do crafts, hear Bible Stories, and pray together. Both Sunday School classes have been learning stories from the Old Testament this semester.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR

The St. Paul's Children's Choirs are back in 2022! With weekly rehearsals and leading music at several services this Fall, there is lots of learning and beautiful music being made!



YOUTH GROUP

YG Math...

- Good Dinner
- Fun Game
- Compline in the chapel

The perfect Sunday night!
Youth Group Superlatives

Favorite Fruit or Vegetable served:
Apple slices with caramel for dipping

Favorite Game:
Hide and Seek

Most requested piece of St. Paul's merchandise:
Bucket Hats



Family Ministry



9am Worship Hosts

With the newly designed Family Service at 9am on Sunday mornings we have had the chance to see more young people serve! Each week we have families serve as Worship Hosts; they help welcome people, carry in the cross, read the lessons, lead the Prayers of the People, and help invite people to communion. It has been an incredible way to see children and youth serve!

Holy Questions

Holy Questions is a new program for families this Fall! Families gather monthly on Wednesday nights to eat, learn, and worship together! So far we have discussed "What is the Eucharist?" and "What is the bible?".

A highlight: When we were watching Reverend Jenni break the bread during the Eucharist, the host (the big wafer) broke into three pieces. Jenni was holding two of them, but the third piece did several flips until it landed in the chalice of wine!

Preview of Upcoming Holy Questions:

- January 11, 2023 What happens when we are baptized?
- February 22, 2023 Ash Wednesday Family Service
- March 8, 2023 How do we forgive?
- April 6, 2023 Family Maundy Thursday Meal and Service
- May 10, 2023 What is prayer and how does God talk to us?



Save the date!
May 19 - 21
2023

Sign-Ups for our annual parish weekend will be available in January.

Questions?

Email Lillian Hardaway
youthandchildren@stpaulsalexandria.com



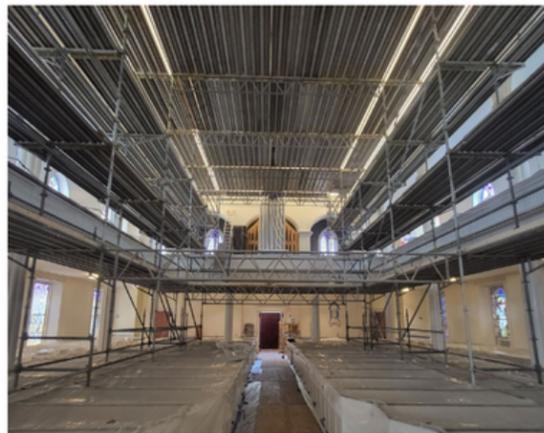
St. Paul's Foundation

Sanctuary Painting Project

Guided by its mission to build an endowment for the support, care, maintenance, and restoration of the buildings and grounds owned by St. Paul's Church and to support and benefit the Christian mission of the church outside the parish, the St. Paul's Foundation continues to support vital maintenance projects.

This summer the sanctuary received a long-awaited face lift. The entire area was closed, Sunday worship moved to Upper Norton Hall, and the whole sanctuary was painted. Scaffolding was erected late in May and stayed up through August. Funded by the St. Paul's Foundation, the project not only included painting but also updating the lighting throughout the church. When worship returned in September the bright gleaming walls were a welcome sight for all.

The endowment of the St. Paul's Foundation stands at just over \$6M. With the addition of the Simmons bequest last year the Foundation has expanded its reach to support the cemetery, the music fund, and the St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool. We are so grateful for all those who have remembered St. Paul's in their estate plans; the legacy of worship and service at St. Paul's will continue in great part to these generous parishioners.



Stewardship

Advent and Year-End Giving



Maria Halloran

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Advent is here. The season of expectation and preparation for the birth of Christ. And, in the astronomical calendar, the season of the winter solstice - the shortest day and the longest night. Each Sunday during Advent we light a candle and each Sunday as we light another candle the light from the advent wreath grows. These candles not only give light to our darkening days, but they also represent the light of Christ coming into the world.

Our mission statement at St. Paul's is to Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God. Much like the Advent wreath, our light grows as we worship, learn, and serve together. We are strengthened and nourished by weekly worship services; challenged to dig deeper into our faith through adult formation; and we are united in efforts to serve those in need in our city and around the globe. In all these endeavors our individual lights, strengthened by joining together with others, become a beacon that can cast away the works of darkness.

As 2022 draws to a close we have much to be thankful for at St. Paul's. At the top of the list is the parish community which sustains and supports the programs, ministries, and day-to-day operations of this vibrant parish. The generous financial support of so many people enables St. Paul's to continue ministering to this community as it has for over 200 years. As we continue to rebuild and renew after what has been an unprecedented time in the history of our church, the people of St. Paul's continue to faithfully uphold their call to give generously to the Operating Fund.

Covenant Circle Corner



The St. Paul's Foundation would like to acknowledge and announce that it received a generous gift from the estate of Marisa "Misa" M.M. Smith who passed away on September 26, 2021 at the age of 92. A letter to St. Paul's from her goddaughter notes that Misa was "a long-time member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church...She had many fond memories of attending with her parents Delos H. Smith and Iris B. Smith, and after they both passed. She moved permanently to Manteo, NC in 1994, but still loved her Church there [in Alexandria]." We are honored that Ms. Smith held St. Paul's in such high esteem and grateful that she included the St. Paul's Foundation in her estate planning.

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 Circle has grown to over 87 members. If you are interested in learning more about the St. Paul's Foundation or the Covenant Circle, please contact Maria Halloran, Director of Stewardship, at stewardship@stpaulsalexandria.com.

YEAR END-GIVING - DATES TO KNOW

DEC 5

A Qualified Charitable Distribution

For parishioners 70 ½ or older, a qualified charitable distribution allows individuals to make certain charitable contributions directly. If you would like to make a contribution to St. Paul's from your IRA, please speak with your IRA administrator.

DEC 16

Make A Gift of Appreciated Assets

Gifts of appreciated stock should be initiated by December 16, 2022. Contact Maria Halloran, stewardship@stpaulsalexandria.com, for delivery information you need for the church account at Morgan Stanley.

DEC 31

Donate online or by check

Visit www.stpaulsalexandria.com/donate-now to make a year-end gift, complete your 2022 pledge, or make a pledge to support the 2023 Operating Fund. You can also make a gift to a specific ministry in honor of a loved one. Please note that all gifts must be received by 11:59 pm on December 31st. You can also mail a check to the parish office or place in the offering plate on Sunday. All gifts must be postmarked December 31st.