

The EPISTLE

Advent 2021



Rejoice, rejoice
Emmanuel, Shall come to thee O Israel.

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Cover Photo: Youth Group Compline lanterns.

Staff and Church Leadership

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- The Rev. Jenni Ovenstone
Senior Associate Rector
- The Rev. Alyse E. Viggiano
Associate Rector
- Joanna Unangst
Seminarian
- Kurt Unangst
Seminarian
- James Pickett
Seminarian

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Director of Operations
- Eric Schnobrick
Minister of Music
- Lillian Hardaway
Minister of Youth, Children, and Families
- Laura Rose
Events Coordinator
- Laura Simmons
Director, Lazarus Ministry
- Jameson Bloom
Communications Coordinator
- Donna Lefevé
Special Projects Coordinator

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Head of School
- Candi Sparrow
Preschool Manager

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- Cari Steiner (*Vice-Chair*)
- Catherine Linskey (*Secretary*)
- Jim Wallace (*Treasurer*)
- Catherine Schmidt
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- John Keppler
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- Saint Pollard



A Letter from the Rector

Wishing You a Ted Lasso Christmas

The Rev. Oran E. Warder

Dear People of St. Paul's:

Finding joy is sometimes a challenge. These days, joy seems to be in particularly short supply as our seemingly endless Covid journey continues with all of its complex, unwelcome and ongoing consequences. Blessedly however, joy can sometimes find us. That is the only way I can explain my obsession with the television series *Ted Lasso* (Apple TV). In the midst of these challenging days and in this unlikely place, I am surprised by joy again and again with every episode. I hasten to add that as much as I love this series, it does indulge in some salty language and adult themes that are only appropriate for a mature audience. Having said that, *Ted Lasso* makes me joyful.

The basic premise of the show is that one of the main characters, Rebecca Welton, wins the ownership of an English soccer team in an acrimonious divorce settlement. In an act of intentional sabotage, designed to torment her unfaithful husband, who loves this team more than anything else in the world, she hires an American football coach, Ted Lasso, to lead the team. Her aim is to humiliate her ex-husband by destroying his beloved team. Coach Lasso has never played or coached soccer but is eager to take on this challenge and to lead and inspire. In spite of his relentless positivity, optimism, and good will, he endures a barrage of attacks from his own players, the sports press, and the local community. His neighborhood pub is not even a safe haven from abuse.



As the series unfolds, it becomes clear that Ted Lasso inhabits a world where people and relationships matter most, where moral character transcends the ugliness that has come to define so much of our current human interactions, and where kindness and compassion are more important than winning. And he invites others to join him.

I won't say more about how things turn out but will highlight the Season 2 Christmas episode. There are two joyful story lines that grabbed my attention. The first involves the team owner Rebecca and Coach Lasso (now himself newly divorced and far away from home) who, instead of spending Christmas Day sad and alone, together engage in multiple acts of great generosity and service to those in need in their community. In the end it is clear that they were the ones who benefited most from these actions. The second storyline focuses on the team's Director of Communications, Leslie Higgins, and his family's tradition of inviting any member of the team who wishes, to join them for Christmas Dinner. Most of the players come from all over the globe, and are from many cultures and faiths, and are far away from loved ones. As Christmas Day progresses they come and keep coming as tables are added and added until the entire first floor of their modest home is set for a great feast. Mr. Higgins stands to offer a toast and a blessing over this gathering and in doing so offers thanks for the gift of "the family we are born with, and the family that we pick up along the way."

Among many other things, Christmas is an annual reminder that people and relationships matter. At its core, the gift of the incarnation is about a God who is so in love with a fallen creation and a fallen humanity and because of that love is moved to become a creature in order to save it. By becoming one of us, God has forever blessed us. This 2021 Advent/Christmas Epistle Magazine is in many ways a reflection of that incarnated love: love shared with those in need; love that shapes our community; and love that sends us forth into the world to shine as a light. I wish you great joy in this holy season.

The Rev. Oran Warder



**LIFE AT
ST.
PAUL'S**





**WELCOME
BACK!**



From the Archives...

"In Case You Have Forgotten"



Corinne Marasco

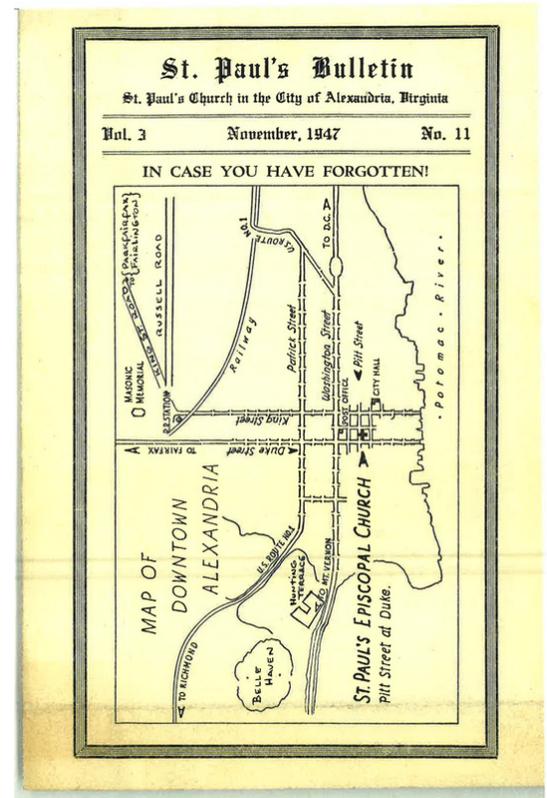
Maps are navigational devices. They tell us where we are and where we want to go. Maps shape our worldview. They orient us geographically and connect us to the physical world. Why would the parishioners of St. Paul's in 1947 need a map to tell them where they could find their church? We don't know the exact reason but some historical context about the Episcopal Church after World War II might help us to understand this map.

World War II was a seminal event in the history of American religion. The duress of war led troops to contemplate their pre-existing religious beliefs and identities based on their personal experiences on the battlefields. Wartime circumstances sometimes limited access to chaplains, leaving soldiers to improvise how they practiced their religion, such as organizing and leading services and participating in communal worship. Furthermore, wartime service gave Americans the opportunity to experience religious diversity, challenging previous assumptions they may have had about other faiths. The religious beliefs and practices the veterans brought home transformed the post-war religious landscape as well as American life in general.¹

In 1943, The Episcopal Church was concerned that cradle Episcopalians would forsake their lifelong identification with the church after the war. At that year's General Convention, the Committee on the State of the Church reported, "Our young men and young women in the Armed Forces abroad have gained a new appreciation and understanding of the world as a neighborhood and its need to become more of a brotherhood. The Church at home must be ready to welcome this army of youth after the war by sharing that vision and giving of its substance to realize it."²

At the 1946 General Convention, the committee was pleased to report an increase in post-war seminary enrollments; however, it was less pleased with the static number of baptisms. "Sermons must be preached on the subject of Baptism and parents must be reminded of the necessity of this Sacrament. [...] We look with utter disfavor on the prevalent fad of making the Sacrament of Holy Baptism the occasion for a cocktail party."³

The committee was further concerned that parents' seeming religious indifference to baptism also extended to Sunday school. "There is a growing secularization of family life which should give us serious concern. Several studies which have been made reveal that Saturday night parties are a growing custom and that many parents will not get up on Sunday morning in time to get their children to Church School.[...] However unsatisfactory and inadequate the Church School as an institution may be, it is the best instrument we have for Christian nurture. It should be strengthened, not abolished."⁴



St. Paul's Bulletin, November, 1947

"HE CAN'T LOSE"

The Baptism of a child is a wonderful service. The parents quietly in their hearts thank God that this little one has been safely given to them. Then we believe that although God loves all these children, baptized or not, that this particular one will stand in a different relationship to our loving heavenly Father after Baptism. Finally, we believe that because the child is baptized, he will stand a better chance of victory in the constant tension between good and evil which will fill his life ahead. If he is faithful to his baptism, he can't lose!

A reminder to parents of the necessity and solemnity of baptism.

¹ Walters, Kevin L., *Beyond the Battle: Religion and American Troops In World War II*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Kentucky, 2013. https://uknowledge.uky.edu/history_etds/21 See also Gates, Ben, and Michael Snape. Review of God and Uncle Sam: Religion and America's Armed Forces in World War II. *Anglican and Episcopal History* 87, no. 3 (2018): 362–64. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26532553>. ² Episcopal Church, *Journal of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America: Held in Cleveland, Ohio, from October Second to October Eleventh, Inclusive, in the Year of Our Lord 1943*: with Appendices. (N.p.: Printed for the Convention, 1943), p. 549. ³ Episcopal Church, *Journal of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America: Held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania from September Tenth to Twentieth, Inclusive, in the Year of Our Lord 1946*: with Appendices. (N.p.: Printed for the Convention, 1946), p. 588. ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 593-4. ⁵ Diocese of Virginia, *Journal of the 150th Annual Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia: Held in Richmond, Virginia on the 16th and 17th of May, 1945*. (N.p.: Printed for the Council, 1945), p. 41. ⁶ Diocese of Virginia, *Journal of the 151st Annual Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia: Held in Richmond, Virginia on the 15th and 16th of May, 1946*. (N.p.: Printed for the Council, 1946), pp. 62-63. ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 65. ⁸ Diocese of Virginia, *Journal of the 152nd Annual Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Virginia: Held in Alexandria, Virginia on the 21st and 22nd of May, 1947*. (N.p.: Printed for the Council, 1947), pp. 70-71. ⁹ Cornell University – PJ Mode Collection of Persuasive Cartography, <https://persuasivemaps.library.cornell.edu/>. Accessed 11 November 2021.

At the diocesan level, the concerns about Sunday school were taken to heart. In 1945, Bishop Frederick D. Goodwin noted that while the Diocese was growing and its financial status was improving, Sunday school attendance was lacking. "There are no more persons enrolled in our Sunday Schools today with 1,500,000 communicants than there were in 1890, when there were less than 400,000 communicants. While many factors are involved the inescapable conclusion is that our Sunday Schools are just not educating the children of our church families and those for whom we are responsible. In many places these schools are doing grand work and they are still the most important single factor in religious education in America. They deserve our full support and the faithful and in many cases the efficient teachers deserve our cordial appreciation."⁵

At the 1946 Annual Council, the diocesan leadership announced a plan of action for the coming year, including:

- An effort by every parish to draw the unchurched into the Diocese as well as bringing inactive members back into the fellowship.
- A 25% increase in confirmation candidates and a 10% increase in Sunday school enrollment.
- Better preparation for parents and godparents for baptism and more baptisms during the 11:00 Sunday service.⁶

These goals relied on as much lay participation as possible. The Committee on the State of the Church called attention to local congregations as "a cell of life of faith and hope in an ailing world." They saw a need for "more personal evangelism and for education" in the principles of Christian religion and practice of the Christian way. The committee was also disturbed to report fewer baptisms and confirmations in 1945 than in 1944. "More upsetting is the fact that the Sunday School population decreased by six per cent in 1945. Such statistics are inadequate measures of the spirit but they indicate an alarming neglect of Christian education in our homes and in our schools."⁷

Renewing our Endowment

The church has received a gift of two hundred and fifty dollars from the estate of Andrew W. Aitcheson. The Rector and Vestry, in expressing their appreciation to Mr. Aitcheson's family, have deposited this money at the first effort to reimburse the endowment fund of the parish. A downtown church such as ours needs endowment to give it support in times of change and need. We are anxious to recommend this gracious bequest of Mr. Andrew Aitcheson to the friends of St. Paul's Church.

At the end of 1946, the Diocese announced The Bishop's Crusade, an organized program of lay people working with clergy through lay evangelism to revitalize and increase church membership, which had positive effects. At the 1947 Annual Council, the Committee on the State of the Church reported small increases in baptisms, confirmations, and Sunday school attendance. It also considered the crusade a success and urged that lay evangelism continue to be stressed as a means of strengthening the church.⁸

"Persuasive cartography"⁹ refers to maps that communicate primarily by influencing opinions or beliefs rather than by geographic information. This particular map isn't a persuasive map per se, but it appears that it was used to remind parishioners to keep St. Paul's as an integral part of their post-war lives. "For it is God who is at work in you, enabling you to will and to work for God's good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13)

PARENTS OF CHURCH SCHOOL CHILDREN

The meeting of Church School parents and teachers, which was postponed in October, will take place on Friday, November 14, at 8 pm, in the Norton Memorial. If you have a child in any department of the Church School you are invited to come for dessert and coffee. We are anxious to have you meet the person into whose hands you have given the religious education of your child. We also want you to see the material that is being used, the class rooms, and to meet the parents of other children. This evening we consider an essential part of our program of religious education and a first step in parent-teacher relationships. A committee composed of Mr. Albert A. Smoot, Mrs. William Brooke, Miss Gay Shepperson and Mrs. Frederiek Barksdale are in charge of the arrangements for the meeting. Parents, this is a MUST for you!

BE PRESENT ON LOYALTY SUNDAY—NOVEMBER 2

An invitation for parents to meet Church School teachers in an effort to become more vested in the religious education of their children. Note the reminder about Loyalty Sunday, during which members of the congregation are asked to make their financial pledges for the coming year.

St. Paul's Bulletin

Highlights from November 1947

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| November 3.....2:30 pm | Day Chapter of the Women's Auxiliary |
| 8:30 pm | Young Women's League - Open Forum- "Marriage Today" (Norton Memorial- Everyone Invited) |
| November 8.....8:15 pm | Square Dance - Norton Memorial Young Women's League - Open to the public |

Square Dance

A "Sadie Hawkins Day" square dance will be given in the Norton Memorial on Saturday night, November 8, at 8:15 o'clock, by the Young Women's League. The annual square dance given by the League is a popular affair with an informal atmosphere created by old clothes, optional costumes, gay decorations, and energetic dancing to the tune of fiddles. This year additional stunts are planned in connection with the celebration of "Sadie Hawkins Day," which in Li'l Abner's home town of Dogpatch is the day all "single wimmen" are entitled to marry the first unfortunate man they are able to catch.

Seeking the Welfare of the City

Investing in Restorative Economics in Alexandria



Oran Warder

Rector's Note: What follows is Part II of a three-part St. Paul's parish outreach proposal. After a brief review of Part I, this section highlights conversations with potential local partners engaged in a similar or related mission (other faith communities, local non profits, local business and community leaders). As a result of these conversations, this section concludes with an initial proposal, the identification of an able partner, as well as an appeal for support, that will allow us to get started in January 2022. God willing and with the support of the parish, Part III will be a progress report on our initial effort, an overview of what we are learning and experiencing, and a more detailed and comprehensive proposal for the continuation of our efforts. I continue to ask for your prayers and support as we seek to discern where God might be leading us. (The full article on Part I of the proposal can be found on pages 12-14 of the Fall 2021 Epistle Magazine and can be accessed on the parish website stpaulsalexandria.com)

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

This passage from the book of the prophet Jeremiah captures a great truth, that our welfare is directly tied to the welfare of others. None of us can fully flourish without all of us having the ability to flourish. Thus our efforts to improve the welfare of our community are not only an outward expression of our Christian faith, but they are also in our own best interests.

This proposal is essentially an outgrowth of our St. Paul's Lazarus Ministry and perhaps represents a next step in its development. While emergency assistance is vital to support our most vulnerable neighbors, and we will continue this important work, it does little to shift the dynamics or address the causes that lead to the need for immediate emergency assistance.

Addressing systemic transformative change is an enormous and potentially overwhelming task. With this proposal we seek to carve out a smaller niche that will create and support a positive cycle of change to help guide and nurture financial growth, stability and security for some of our Alexandria neighbors. It is also a specific and tangible way to address certain issues of injustice and inequality in our community. While only one small effort, it can make a significant impact over time.

A Review of the Proposal

This proposal, which I am calling an investment in restorative economics in Alexandria, is modeled after the microeconomic enterprises that have been so successful in the developing world and seeks to apply these principles to our local context. There are 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.

Community Conversations and a Potential Partner

There were two goals in our dozens of conversations with other non profit and faith community leaders: 1) Does this proposal address a real and unmet need; and 2) Are there able and willing partners who already have experience and expertise that can help us launch this initiative? The answer to the first question was a definitive yes. While there are many others engaged in the work of supporting small businesses, this work is mostly focused on established businesses and involve much larger loans. The answer to question two was also a definitive yes.

There was one potential partner that almost immediately surfaced that has exhibited the experience and expertise needed to assist us in our efforts. The Latino Economic Development Corporation of Washington, DC (LEDC) is an organization that has established the training, education, and relationship building components of our proposal. Furthermore, they already have the mechanisms in place to grant and service the loans that we would make. They are not currently engaged in the Alexandria community and have been exploring how to do just that.

LEDC was originally established to serve the Latino Community but its mission has expanded to include all underserved communities. Our research confirms the legitimacy and effectiveness of their work, their success in serving their mission, and their ability to both attract and retain national corporate funding. Our research also confirms that those served by LEDC in local communities are a reflection of the actual demographics of the underserved population of that particular community.



**LATINO ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

In our partnership we would help with the promotion of the program and the small businesses we are supporting, collaborate to identify both potential clients and program volunteers, and provide funding for the services provided by LEDC. LEDC would provide small business technical assistance services, credit-building programs and access to capital to underserved residents and entrepreneurs in the city of Alexandria.

Our initial goals would be to:

- Conduct a minimum of 12 workshops on small business development and/or access to capital, each including 5-10 participants for educational and outreach purposes.
- Serve a minimum of 75 clients with one-to-one technical assistance.
- Make a minimum of 15 credit-building or small business loans. Credit-building loans up to \$2,500 will be offered at 0% interest and no application or closing fees for clients. Other concessionary loans will be offered as per availability of flexible lending capital.
- Provide a quarterly progress report that includes a description of the services provided, number of clients that have applied for, participated in or benefited from the service, and relevant demographic characteristics of the client population.

Next Steps

My plan is to ask the vestry to make a three-year commitment at a cost of \$50,000 per year, realizing that we will need to raise the funds over and above our current annual budget requirements, and over and above our current and continuing outreach commitments. My hope is that interested parishioners will be willing to support and help grow this effort.

My dream for the programs is not only that we raise enough money to get started, but that we experience such success that we move beyond the necessary administrative costs to actually create, build and grow a loan fund so that we will have more capital to invest which will help to expand the reach of this program. I pray that in this investment in the welfare of the city we will will also find our own.

If you are interested in supporting this effort or have any questions please contact me directly - oran@stpaulalexandria.com.

Aid to Local Afghani Refugee Family



Early service members shine as a light in the world to the glory of God Dale Allen

Early this summer I received a call from “Dr. Kathy,” a longtime friend who lives on the West Coast. Through her church she had heard of an Afghani refugee family that might need help getting settled in Alexandria. She suggested I ask St. Paul’s to help. In their early thirties, husband Jawid was still in Afghanistan, but his wife, Wazhma, and two daughters, Lemarina, age four, and Oba, age two, were already here living temporarily in an Afghani friend’s rental property. Jawid was finally able to leave Afghanistan and arrived in the United States in early July with two rolled up Afghani rugs he had bought new and had hand-carried all the way from Kabul. Those beautiful rugs now hang on the walls of their apartment as bold artwork and as proud reminders of their heritage.

The family was able to leave their country on Special Immigrant Visas (SIV) because Wazhma, who was a broadcast journalist in Kabul focusing on political topics, had worked with the U.S. Army. This allowed Wazhma and the girls, plus Jawid, who was a political science lecturer at a university, to get out before the massive exodus that occurred in August just before the Taliban returned to power. A poignant moment came when Wazhma proudly stated, “I was a working woman in Afghanistan.” They started their journey of applying to the U.S. Government to leave Afghanistan more than five years ago.

Kathy had warned me that I might need an interpreter to communicate with Wazhma. Instead, I found her easier to understand than the actual interpreter! I met with the family the first week of July to find out exactly what they needed. Many of their needs were already being met by three major refugee charities, and I did not want to reinvent that wheel, so I asked them if I could focus on furnishing their first apartment and getting new clothes and toy donations.

An Afghani friend co-signed for their new apartment in Alexandria. Between my friends, neighbors and church family we could get just about everything Wazhma and Jawid would need. And maybe even more.

I told Oran what I was working on and he pointed me to several good additional refugee resources, like our own Lazarus Ministry and to the Outreach Director at Christ Church, who has weekly Zoom update meetings with other area churches and charities. They focus on the refugees who more recently arrived and were sent to stay at military bases for processing. Oran also suggested that I ask the small group of faithful, diehard St. Paul’s early service attendees to help. Years ago, pre-Covid, we had all formed our own dinner group and were very close. During Covid we had weekly hour-long Zoom meetings on Sunday mornings to help us stay sane and to keep in touch. I gave regular updates on our Afghani family this past summer and got terrific responses and donations.



Jawid , Wazhma, and their two daughters, Lemarina, age four, and Oba, age two.

Together, here is how we were able to help:

- Introduced Jawid to a local Afghani rug merchant who offered him a job so he could get on his feet and eventually follow his own career path, probably continuing in academia. (Jawid has since appeared several times on air on Afghani-related TV talk shows as a subject matter expert.)
- Provided two comfy living room chairs, a TV and TV stand, a dresser and mirror set, a nightstand, towels, bed linens, and a set of nice dishes, stemware, napkins and placemats. All for their new one-bedroom apartment.
- Discovered Wazhma and a tres chic early service parishioner wear the same size clothes and shoes! Wazhma now has many “new” outfits and new shoes for when she restarts her career here. (She has some good connections with former Afghani journalist colleagues now working in the United States.)
- Donated the most efficiently stocked (and heavy) toolbox I’ve ever seen from a couple that is downsizing their home.
- Have visited with Wazhma, Jawid and the girls to get to know them. They, in turn, have expressed their gratitude and an interest in visiting St. Paul’s, as they have never been inside a Christian church.



Left, Wazhma and a tres chic early service parishioner wear the same size clothes and shoes! Wazhma now has many “new” outfits.

Below, as big sister, Lemarina claims the top bunk as hers even before the bunk bed is completely assembled.



In addition to the early service crowd, I reached out to neighbors, friends and family. All were moved by the plight of so many Afghani refugees in the news, fleeing their homeland in search of a new and safer life here. They have so far generously provided the following: a new laptop computer, area carpets, multiple Amazon gift cards, floor lamps and table lamps, a lot more clothing, towels and linens, a children’s table and chairs set, toys and clothing and a bunk bed for the girls, a warm winter coat for Jawid, household products and lots of hangers. Oldest daughter automatically got the top bunk!

Jawid and Wazhma recently announced that they had passed their DMV tests and now possessed official Virginia driver’s licenses. No car yet, but they are so grateful for all the help they’ve received and optimistic for their future.

After Jawid was finally able to leave Afghanistan he arrived in the United States in early July with two rolled up Afghani rugs he had bought new and had hand-carried all the way from Kabul. Those beautiful rugs now hang on the walls of their apartment as bold artwork and as proud reminders of their heritage.

St. Paul's Lazarus Ministry

Paying It Forward



Laura Simmons

A few years ago Lazarus Ministry got a phone call from one of the social workers at the Alexandria City High School. They had a really smart, hard working young man starting his junior year of high school who was looking at dropping out. The young man was living with a relative. He had just turned 18 and the relative was now asking him to pay rent. He was already responsible for his own living expenses and covered those by working two low paying, part-time jobs. He notified the school that although he really liked learning and going to school, he needed to take on a third job to pay rent and so would have to leave. That's when Lazarus Ministry was called.

Working with the school social worker and head of the International Academy, we developed an approach to address how to keep him in school. We raised funding and developed guidelines he would adhere to while we covered two years of rent and provided a small stipend for living expenses. He was able to stay in school and graduate in 2020 at the top of his class. We would have gone to his graduation had COVID not pre-empted it - and probably felt a bit like proud parents!

Since graduation, he has been hard at work at a full time job, saving up to go to NOVA. He has also been helping out Lazarus Ministry by volunteering as one of our fluent Spanish speakers, making calls to our hispanic clients in the evenings when he gets home. We couldn't be happier for how it has all come round. It is especially gratifying to know St. Paul's help has resulted in a young man's positive start to life as an adult.

Gifts from Gleaners

St. Paul's Outreach in the Community

Our gleaning program finds St. Paul's volunteers at the Alexandria Farmers' Market on Saturday mornings from early summer through early fall collecting veggies and fruit donated by vendors willing to participate in the program. We partner with Christ Church's volunteers and split what is donated for our respective clients. We donate our food to Friends of Guest House and pre-Covid also to our Lazarus clients. This past season we saved over 3,500 lbs of food thanks to the generous vendors.



To show appreciation to the vendors Cindy and Dennis Brack had mugs made with pictures of all the vendors on one side and "thank you" from St. Paul's and Christ Church's volunteers on the other. Dennis Brack took all the pictures and designed the mugs.

St. Paul's Gleaners collect food from the Farmers' Market in Old Town on Saturdays, June - September. Interested in learning more? Email Cindy Brack at ccampbellbrack@gmail.com

Owning Our Faith

What Christmas Will Tell Us This Year



The Rev. Jenni Oventson

Advent centers on waiting, anticipation, expectation. The season of looking and listening back to the prophets to help us look forward to our ultimate hope in God's kingdom-come is layered also with preparation and the anticipation of Christmas joy. For the full speed at which the season seems to move, Advent is always a holy act of waiting, a season for "holding our breath."

But this year, in parishes and congregations everywhere, there is a heightened waiting; there is a wondering, a "waiting to see." It is palpable. I pick it up in the subtle subtexts, and hear it spoken again and again from those who are brave enough to name it aloud: "Who will come ... will they come ... at Christmas?"

For, while God's love and our Gospel hope are constant, we have been changed in and by these years of pandemic, individually in the personal rhythms and insights and longings we are yet quietly uncovering, and "us" as the Church, in all the ways we worship, serve, learn, grow, and gather ... or not.

We have learned how to be streamed, virtual, digital, recorded and remote. We have remembered that we were always meant to be the Church without walls, the Body of Christ in the world. In the wider landscape beyond our doors, we have discovered first-hand how the technological tools that have (thankfully) increased our capacity for connectivity can be the very things that (woefully, frightfully) keep us, even tear us, apart. We have discovered there is a very real virtual space that people inhabit online that desperately needs the good news of God's reconciling love.

In reopening buildings for worship while sustaining online offerings in this ongoing season of emergings, adaptations, and in-betweens, church leaders everywhere have been discerning, sorting out, what to continue to embrace, what to renew, what to recover, what to let go, and how and where to be most faithful to the ways God is calling us at this time. And we are asking, "Where -- emotionally, spiritually, and physically -- where are the people?"

At St. Paul's, we have intentionally spent a season in the "Owning our Faith" series asking what the foundational practices of our faith tell us about what it means to be an incarnational, embodied people in this time of so much distance, and how these foundations both call and shape us as such: through sacrament, Scripture, belonging, prayer, and celebration.

We wonder: Have our efforts to sustain, support and comfort the Body of Christ remotely through isolation and lockdown and distancing made us too comfortable at being remote? Have our flexibility and resilience expanded our reach and ability to engage the world at large, or made us just one more choice to be overwhelmed by it? Are we doing the most faithful things most faithfully? Are people coming "back," and how are we called to go forward?

Somehow in all this asking, Christmas has become a kind of touchstone; we have slipped into thinking that what happens this year in Christmas worship -- the celebration of the Incarnation itself -- will be the unspoken answer to all our embodied questions.

Yet, living an incarnational faith as an incarnational people, I believe, means that the realities of the answers will be complex, varied, and evolving. Christmas will tell us something about our patterns and people's lives at this particular time that will give us insight and wisdom for being faithful today.

But Christmas has already answered a question even deeper for the Church than "where are the people?" Christmas has answered, "Where is God?"

What we will know we have always known: God in Christ has come to us in the flesh. God has dwelled, and dwells, among us. God meets us and loves us in all the facets of our embodied lives with their limitations, frailties, and vulnerabilities, beauties, and joys. The fullness of God's love -- embodied in Jesus from cradle to cross -- continues embodied in each of our lives and in our shared life as Christ's Body every day, in the ordinary and extraordinary moments.

This love is communicated through us in the ways we touch lives in the world in the physical realities of the body, as well as in mind and heart and soul. This love is fed to us by Word, Spirit, and the Bread of Life, at God's table and beyond. This love is essential to our being ... we know that now more than ever, deep down in our bodies and our bones.

We are eager to share this incarnate love with you as we gather for worship around God's table at St. Paul's this Christmas. We affirm it is already yours to receive and to give, wherever you find yourself.

**You can find recordings of all the
Owning Our Faith
adult forum series on our website
www.stpaulsalexandria.com.**

Advent at St. Paul's

Dec. 05 @ 10 am
DECK THE HALLS

"Trim the hearth and set the table...Love the guest, is on the way". Enjoy an Advent flower arranging demonstration, led by Laura Francis, and a brief discussion led by Oran Warder that seeks to answer the question, why do we deck the halls in the first place?

There will be for crafts and fun for children as well.

Dec. 05 @ 6 pm
HALLMARK MOVIE NIGHT

Join the Rev. Jenni Ovenstone for a Hallmark Christmas movie and a brief reflection on the real, true meaning of Christmas. Family members and friends are welcome to share in this comfy and casual evening. Feel free to bring a bagged dinner to go with your cookies and cocoa.

Dec. 12 @ 10 am
CHRISTMAS SING-A-LONG

An inter-generational Christmas carol sing-along!

Dec. 12 @ 5 pm
DRIVE-THRU NATIVITY

See more information below.

Dec. 19 @ 9 am
CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Our annual retelling of the birth of Jesus. Children can grab a costume and join in the lively nativity scene. Afterwards there will be cookies and holiday treats in Norton Hall.

Dec. 19 @ 11 am
ADVENT LESSONS & CAROLS

Advent Movie Night

Calling All Hallmark Movie Fans!

The Rev. Jenni Ovenstone

The secret is out! After my recent confession from the pulpit that I watch Hallmark Christmas movies, I have discovered that I am among friends at St. Paul's! As it turns out, there are quite a few of us who, much to our chagrin, secretly love these formulaic films in which the protagonist experiences an unforeseen and inconvenient life event, meets (or reunites with) an unlikely flame, and goes on to discover romance, love, themselves, and "the true meaning of Christmas."

I wonder if perhaps we are ready to admit to ourselves and one another that, in the midst of all the changes and chances of this life, especially in the ongoing stresses of these past two pandemic years, we can all use a little predictability and some simple pleasures.

If this sounds like you, come and be among friends on the first Sunday of Advent for a Hallmark movie night! We will view a quintessential Hallmark Christmas movie together (selection tbd ... only the cheesiest and cheeriest will do,) share Christmas cookies and hot cocoa (there has to be hot cocoa,) and end our evening with a brief reflection on the real, true meaning of Christmas.

Back by popular demand, the Drive Thru Nativity will be on **Sunday, December 12th** from **5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.** Sign-ups will be required and will be available on our website.

Pick a time, pile in the car with a thermos of hot chocolate, and head to the St. Paul's Cemetery. Your car will be transported through space and time to the town of Bethlehem on the night the world welcomed Christ, the newborn king.



Christmas at St. Paul's

We are thrilled to once again be worshipping together, in person this Christmas season. St. Paul's will offer several services on Christmas Eve and one service on Christmas Day. The schedule below lists service times as well a brief description of what to expect. Additionally this year we are including a crowd expectation estimate. We will continue with our regular Sunday service protocols but do expect larger crowds. The 6:00 pm service will be livestreamed and recorded. The recorded version will available on YouTube and on our website following the 6:00 p.m. service. As always, during these uncertain times, please be sure to check our website, stpaulsalexandria.com, for the latest service information.

Friday, December 24th

- 12:00 p.m. A quiet, contemplative service
Crowd Expectation: low
- 2:00 p.m. Family service with special sermon presentation
Crowd Expectation: low
- 4:00 p.m. Family service with special sermon presentation
Crowd Expectation: high
- 6:00 p.m. Festive Rite II Eucharist with choir and candle lighting
Featuring the Barclay Brass Quintet
Crowd Expectation: high
- 10:00 p.m. Festive Rite II Eucharist with choir and candle lighting
Featuring the Barclay Brass Quintet
Crowd Expectation: low

Saturday, December 25th

- 10:00 a.m. Rite Two, with organ

Sunday, December 26th

- 10:00 a.m. Christmas Lessons and Carols

Sunday, January 2nd

- 10:00 a.m. The Second Sunday of Christmas, Rite II with organ
- 5:00 p.m. The Second Sunday of Christmas, contemplative service with candle lighting and prayers for healing

Sunday, January 9th

Our regular schedule resumes with services at:

- 8:00 a.m.
- 9:00 a.m. ←•••••
- 11:00 a.m.
- 5:00 p.m.



Don't miss the annual Epiphany pageant and Fun Day! The 9:00 a.m. service will feature the Epiphany pageant and after the service at 10:00 we will have an Epiphany parade and activities.

Epiphany

12 Days of Scones

Christmas-tide Baking



The Rev. Alyse Viggiano

It's a Christmas staple, a classic tune that makes its way into our ears whether we want it there or not, the 12 Days of Christmas. It seems like a very secular creation, yet its roots are actually found in the Christian tradition. Christmas-tide starts on Christmas day (when we celebrate Jesus' incarnation/birth into the world) to the Epiphany (when the Magi/Wise men finally arrive to honor Jesus' birth), which spans a total of 12 days. There are lots of different traditions like celebrating different Saints' feast days, which is perfectly meet and right, but this year St. Paul's is offering a new tradition, the 12 Days of Scones for Christmas-tide. Perhaps this sounds like a lot of scones, but who isn't constantly in need of more pastries to serve to the revolving door of guests visiting during this time. With that in mind and to make it extra easy, all scones start with the same base (which makes a basic vanilla scone) but have different ingredients to reflect that specific day. A very merry Christmas-tide to you and your beloveds, and happy baking!

Basic Scone recipe:

1. Turn on your very favorite Christmas music, I suggest O Holy Night sung by Jake Wesley Rogers.
2. Set your oven to **450 degrees fahrenheit**.
3. Collect your ingredients: **all purpose flour, white sugar, baking powder, salt, unsalted butter, cream cheese, heavy whipping cream, and vanilla extract**.
4. Find your mixing bowl, measuring cups, liquid measuring cup (yes this matters), whisk, spatula, and baking sheet (lined with parchment paper).
5. In your mixing bowl put **2 ½ cups of flour, ½ cup of sugar, 1 tbsp baking powder, and 1 tsp salt**. Now whisk together until all ingredients are incorporated.
6. At room temperature (if not microwave for 10-15 secs) cut a **stick of butter** into tablespoon increments and drop into the flour mixture. Also at room temperature, cut **two ounces of cream cheese** and drop into the flour mixture. Now incorporate the butter and cream cheese into the flour mixture until it looks like "sand" (no larger chunks of butter or cream cheese).
7. If you are adding any extra "fun" ingredients (see the next page) they would join the bowl here and mix so that they are evenly distributed.
8. Make a well in the center of the flour and butter/cream cheese mixture. In your liquid measuring cup pour **6 ounces of heavy whipping cream** and stir in **1 tablespoon of vanilla extract**. Pour the liquids into the well of the flour mixture.
9. Using your spatula mix all the ingredients together until they form a cohesive mass, and then drop onto the prepared lined baking sheet and form into a rectangle about 2 inches thick.
10. Cut the rectangle into about 24 triangles and separate with enough space that when they bake up they don't touch each other (perhaps actually a rule for people to follow generally during Christmas-tide).
11. Bake for 7 minutes at 450 degrees fahrenheit, after 7 minutes turn the oven down to 325 degrees fahrenheit, turn the baking sheet 180 degrees, and bake for another 5 minutes.
12. After a total of 12 minutes in the oven take the scones out and allow to cool. When scones can be handled without burning your fingers you can FINALLY enjoy your hard work!

12 Days of Scones

A PARTRIDGE IN A PEAR TREE

ADD 1 ½ OF CUPS OF DRIED PEARS AND 1 TSP OF CINNAMON



1

TWO TURTLE DOVES

ADD 2 CUPS OF CHOPPED DOVE BRAND WHITE CHOCOLATES MORSELS

2

THREE FRENCH HENS

POUR YOURSELF A GLASS OF WINE AND WEAR A BERET, WHILE MAKING SCONES



3

FOUR CALLING BIRDS

PUT YOUR PHONE ON SILENT, MAKE THIS BATCH WITHOUT INTERRUPTION.



4

FIVE GOLDEN RINGS

ADD 1 ½ CUPS OF CHOPPED GUMMY PEACH RINGS

5

SIX GEESE-A-LAYING

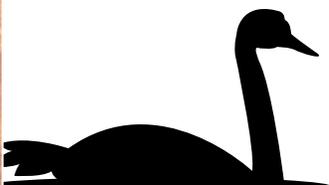
ADD 1 ½ CUPS OF PEELED ALMONDS AND 1 TSP OF ALMOND EXTRACT



6

SEVEN SWANS A SWIMMING

SKIP THIS DAY AND CALL SCHWANN'S FOOD DELIVERY FOR SCONES



7

EIGHT MAIDS A-MILKING

ADD 2 CUPS OF CHOPPED MILK DUDS

8

NINE LADIES DANCING



PUT ON THE DANCE OF THE SUGARPLUM FAIRY FROM THE NUTCRACKER, BUST OUT YOUR BEST MOVES AND FORGET ABOUT THE SCONES ALL TOGETHER.

9

TEN LORDS A-LEAPING

CUT OPEN 4 BAGS OF EARL GREY TEA AND ADD TO THE MIXTURE

10

ELEVEN PIPERS PIPING

ADD 2 CUPS OF CHOPPED CANDY CANES



11

TWELVE DRUMMERS DRUMMING

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH, PUT IN SOME EAR PLUGS AND MAKE THIS FINAL BATCH AND EAT THEM ALL YOURSELF



12

St. Paul's Music Ministry

Six Hundred and One Days



Eric Scnobrick

When the St. Paul's Choir processed into the church on the morning of November 14, it had been six hundred and one days since the last time they had processed out. Susan Dawson counted.

During those 601 days, while everything changed in the world, and changed again, these choir members waited. Some were in their folding chairs on crisp mornings in St. Paul's Cemetery. Others were in the church when we returned to indoor services. A few helped along the summer choir before congregational singing was canceled again. Many participated in the handful of larger virtual offerings that were presented.

But singing is an intimate business. A choir is not just a group of people who sing at the same time. It breathes together. It moves and gives voice as one organic entity that transcends the individual members. It is no surprise, then, that produced videos fell short and that Zoom rehearsals were a nonstarter. Soprano Lynne Benedict addressed this, saying, "Recorded singing [...] fell grossly short of providing that deep sense of connection one experiences when singing with fellow choristers. This connection is what has been missed the most."

The loss of a true and close togetherness has been felt by all of us. Singers, though, were among the first groups of people sidelined by the pandemic, and have been among the last groups invited back into full participation in their lives. And singing is not just something that choristers do, it is something that they are. Lynne added, "The inability to attend in-person church services resulted in a loss of connection to the church family, and the inability to sing with the choir resulted in the loss of a primary means of contributing to the services which St. Paul's provides. No longer an 'us', the net result of the COVID-19 experience has been a partial loss of identity and a sense of disconnectedness."

The impact on worship experience, too, was felt by both choristers and the wider congregation. Tenor Charlie King put it concisely. "Singing is a critical part of my worship." Lynne goes on, "Music is integrally linked to the readings within the liturgy. The two enhance one another and work together to create a transcendent experience which aims to send each person home with both conscious and subconscious messages inherent in the readings and sermon. It is a deeply effective combination which has worked for centuries."

So it was with profound happiness, excitement, and sense of purpose that singing returned to worship. "St. Paul's is a space designed to enhance the play of music within its walls. Singing with the choir enables us to pick up the acoustics in the space to lift up our fellow congregants. It is this that brings great joy to the soul."

A joy that we waited for six hundred and one days to feel.





Welcome, Adriano Spampanato

By now, whether or not you realize it, you have probably heard our new Organist in Residence. Adriano Spampanato joined the community of St. Paul's for the first time on Sunday, October 15th. In his short time with us so far, that morning already stands out as a favorite moment. "It was a warm welcome, and I already felt included as a member of St. Paul's."

A new resident of the Washington Metro region, Adriano moved from New York to join the Washington National Opera (WNO) as a Cafritz Young Artist. It is a demanding and prestigious position in which he will serve as a pianist, repetiteur, and vocal coach for opera rehearsals, recitals, and private events throughout the season. In addition, he will be the assistant conductor for WNO's production of Carmen in May.

Beside his work with WNO, he is an active recitalist, performing frequently with soprano Axelle Fanyo. They presented a program of French and German song at Wigmore Hall in London at the end of October, and will team up again in Paris in December to take part in the Nadia and Lili Boulanger International Voice-Piano Competition.

But for far longer than he has been involved in opera or art song, he has been a church musician. He has been an organist since the age of thirteen, and I was curious what his thoughts on our neo-baroque Casavant organ are. "I'd say playing baroque repertoire is what I love the most on the organ. I feel comfortable on this kind of organ. It is bright and precise and responds immediately to the impulse and energy I give while playing Bach. When I play an organ with too many stops, I can be easily confused and overwhelmed. I have the sensation that I'd never deeply know the instrument. But St. Paul's organ has a great composition where you can play everything before the 19th century, even Mendelssohn and modern (neoclassic) music. The pleasure and connection are immediate!"

If you have been paying attention to the musical happenings at St. Paul's recently, you will have noticed that we are building relationships with some of the finest musicians in the region. Washington Bach Consort, The Thirteen, the Barclay Brass Quintet, and many others are performing at St. Paul's this year. It was in this context that we chose to name Adriano our Organist in Residence. His diverse skill set and creativity are a perfect fit for the expanding profile of our program. While the heart of music at St. Paul's will always be the service offered to and by members of this congregation, and we are blessed with many skilled and dedicated musicians who answer this call on a weekly basis, we also hope to share our gifts with the broader community. Adriano is now part of that vision.

So what would he like to see in our future? "Create a nice baroque ensemble at St. Paul's. I will be able to play the continuo each time. Planning to perform Messiah for Christmas as an example, and trying to dig into less well-known sacred music – building a nice and prestigious concert season at St. Paul's"

It feels like we are already on our way.

St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool

Rise and Shine!



Kristin Teeters, Head of School

Rise and Shine! These words are said all over the world each morning as children wake for another day of school. At St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool our children rise each day - ready to shine - and, oh, how they shine!

At SPEP our children have:



Not only are our children blessed with these learning opportunities and experiences, but they are supported by our vast, loving, and generous community at St. Paul's that provides the vital and strong foundation needed for all of us at SPEP to rise and shine together.

Last fall we started the Rise and Shine Campaign, an annual giving program for St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool. Gifts to the Rise and Shine Fund go directly to support the students of SPEP; ensure competitive salaries and ongoing professional development for our excellent teachers and staff; maintain our unique offering of specials; provide weekly field trips on our beloved yellow bus, which also delivers children to and from school.

This fall we are once again raising funds through our Rise and Shine Campaign. We are grateful for the St. Paul's Parish and Vestry and their belief in and support of the mission of our school; for the beautiful spaces at St. Paul's, both inside and out, that are lovingly maintained and cleaned; for teachers and staff who truly care for the individuality of each child, their progress, safety, learning, and growth; and for our families and parents who value the benefits of an early childhood education and are always willing to lend a hand. And we are especially thankful to all of those who have donated to this year's Rise and Shine Campaign.

There is so much to rise and shine for each day at SPEP! Our doors are always open; come visit and see how we shine!



To make a donation to the
SPEP Rise and Shine campaign
visit spepalx.com



Life at SPEP This Fall...



The 2s class enjoyed watermelon.



The 4s class is all on board the city bus!



A visit from the Alexandria Sheriff.



No one in the 3s class is too sure what to make of this hen.



Who doesn't love science with pumpkins?



The reconfiguration of the classrooms in Wilmer Hall means room for more younger students. We are thrilled to have so many toddlers in our downstairs classrooms.

St. Paul's Children and Youth

Fall Programming Kicks Off!



Lillian Hardaway



A note from Lillian:

I have been serving as the Minister to Children, Youth, and Families for four months! The time has flown by as St. Paul's has kicked off its Fall Programming and navigates being back in person. I love the breadth of programming I get to help provide from preschool chapel, to Children's Sunday School, to Sunday Fun Days, to Youth Group! No week is the same as the week before and I can't wait for all of the St. Paul's traditions that I have yet to experience. If I have not met you in person yet, be sure to say hello next time you see me.

Youth Group Superlatives

Silliest Random Question:
What is your favorite way to eat a potato, and what utensil do you use?

Most Fun Game:
The couch game or Fish Bowl

Most Difficult Meal:
Make your own grilled cheese night

Best Adult Volunteers:
Emily Carlin and Lue Akuak



Youth group concludes each week with compline in the chapel.

Youth Group is Back!

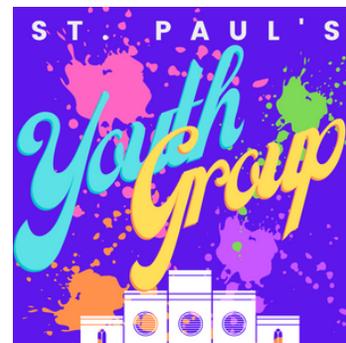
If you walked by the Courtyard between 6 and 8pm on a Sunday evening this Fall, you have probably seen and heard the St. Paul's Youth Group! Most Sundays the Youth Group gathers for a time of community and togetherness. Members of the youth group have answered countless random questions to get to know each other, sometimes begrudgingly worked as a team for a team building challenge, have eaten LOTS of frozen grapes, played lots of games, and prayed the service of Compline together.

You will now find the St. Paul's Youth Group meeting in Norton Hall with just as much joy and silliness as when they met outside.

Confirmation

Confirmation classes will begin in March for all youth 8th-12th grade that are interested in receiving the sacrament of confirmation. The tentative date for confirmation is the bishop's visitation on April 24th. Those that have previously completed the Confirmation classes will be invited to a refresher class and social.

More information to come at the Parents meeting on January 23rd at 12pm.



St. Paul's Youth Service Trip 2022

In the Summer of 2022 St. Paul's Youth Group will be heading to the North Carolina Coast for a week long service trip! Our trip will have time for worship, exploring, and learning about affordable housing, homelessness and coastal conservation. Be on the lookout for ways you can help the team prepare for their trip!

Sunday School and Sunday Fun Days!

During the month of October Children's Sunday School learned about a different Saint each week which culminated in the All Saints Sunday Fun Day! In the month of November, Children's Sunday School talked about Gratitude especially for the people in our lives, the earth that God created, and things that bring us joy.

Saints learned about: Saint Francis, Saint Paul, Saint Cecilia, The Martyrs of Memphis, and All Saints!

Gratitude List: Families, teddy bears, our Sunday School Class, pets, flowers, the Fall leaves, Sunsets, our brains



Save the date!

May 13 - 15 2022

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

Questions?

Email Laura Rose
events@stpaulsalexandria.com





St. Paul's Winter Lectures 2022



FOUNDATION SUNDAY 1.23.22 10:00 AM NORTON HALL

John Raynal, of Raynal Studios in Natural Bridge VA, will join us to discuss the stained glass restoration project recently completed at St. Paul's. Raynal has restored the windows in Princeton University's Chapel, Boston's Old South Church, New York's St. Patrick's Cathedral, Duke University, and many other architectural landmarks.

Started in 2010, the project to restore all 34 windows in the sanctuary was completed this summer. The project was the work of the St. Paul's Foundation



LATROBE LECTURE 2.2.22 7:00 PM SANCTUARY

John O. Peters will deliver the annual Benjamin H. Latrobe Lecture entitled "Cemeteries for the Living, not just the Dead."

Mr. Peters is a lawyer, historian, and published author and photographer. Peters has authored 5 books focusing on the history of courts and cemeteries in the state of Virginia. He provided photographs for 2 of those books.

The Latrobe Lecture is sponsored by the St. Paul's Foundation.



MARTHA J. HORNE LECTURE 2.20.22 10:00 AM NORTON HALL

Barbara Drake Boehm, the Paul and Jill Ruddock curator emerita of the Met Cloisters, will deliver the annual Martha J. Horne lecture, entitled "Daughters of Jerusalem, Medieval and Modern."

Ms. Boehm has written extensively on subjects relating to her exhibition projects and on the Met's permanent collection. The lecture will draw from her book, Jerusalem, 1000–1400: Every People Under Heaven, published in 2016 and will focus on the role that a few select women have played in Jerusalem in the medieval and modern worlds, leading by example of their faiths.

St. Paul's Foundation

Maintenance Projects Completed in 2021

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 St. Paul's Church outside the parish, the St. Paul's Foundation continued to support maintenance projects at St. Paul's this fall.

Beginning last winter and right through the last months of 2021, the Foundation supported 4 major maintenance projects totaling \$329,667. The projects included the Norton gutter replacement, Wilmer and Norton roof repair, and the Wilmer HVAC replacement. 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.

Completed this November, the replacement of the Wilmer Hall HVAC system, was a major project fully funded by the St. Paul's Foundation. The HVAC system was slated to be replaced in upcoming years but when the system totally broke down at the end of the summer, the timeline had to be updated. With the financial support of the St. Paul's Foundation the system was able to be replaced quickly, without the need for additional fundraising which may have slowed down the progress.

The endowment currently stands at \$5,547,349. In 2022 the Foundation will increase its yearly contribution to the St. Paul's Operating budget from \$40,000 to \$70,000. This increased distribution will support ongoing maintenance contracts and personnel. Furthermore, the Foundation continues to work with the Executive Committee of the Vestry to identify urgent maintenance projects to be supported by the maintenance sinking fund.

The St. Paul's Foundation will once again host the annual Benjamin H. Latrobe lecture on Wednesday, February 2nd at 7:00 in the sanctuary (*see box to the left*). The speaker, Mr. John O. Peters, is a lawyer and historian who has a specific focus on cemeteries in Virginia and has written extensively on the subject. His lecture is titled "Cemeteries for the Living, not just the Dead". With the completion of the stained-glass window project the next long-term project for the Foundation will be the creation of a strategic plan for the St. Paul's Cemetery. Mr. Peters's lecture will be a wonderful kick-off for that initiative.



A crane replaces the HVAC roof top unit on Wilmer Hall

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 at St. Paul's

Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;



Maria Halloran

THIS IS THE DAY...

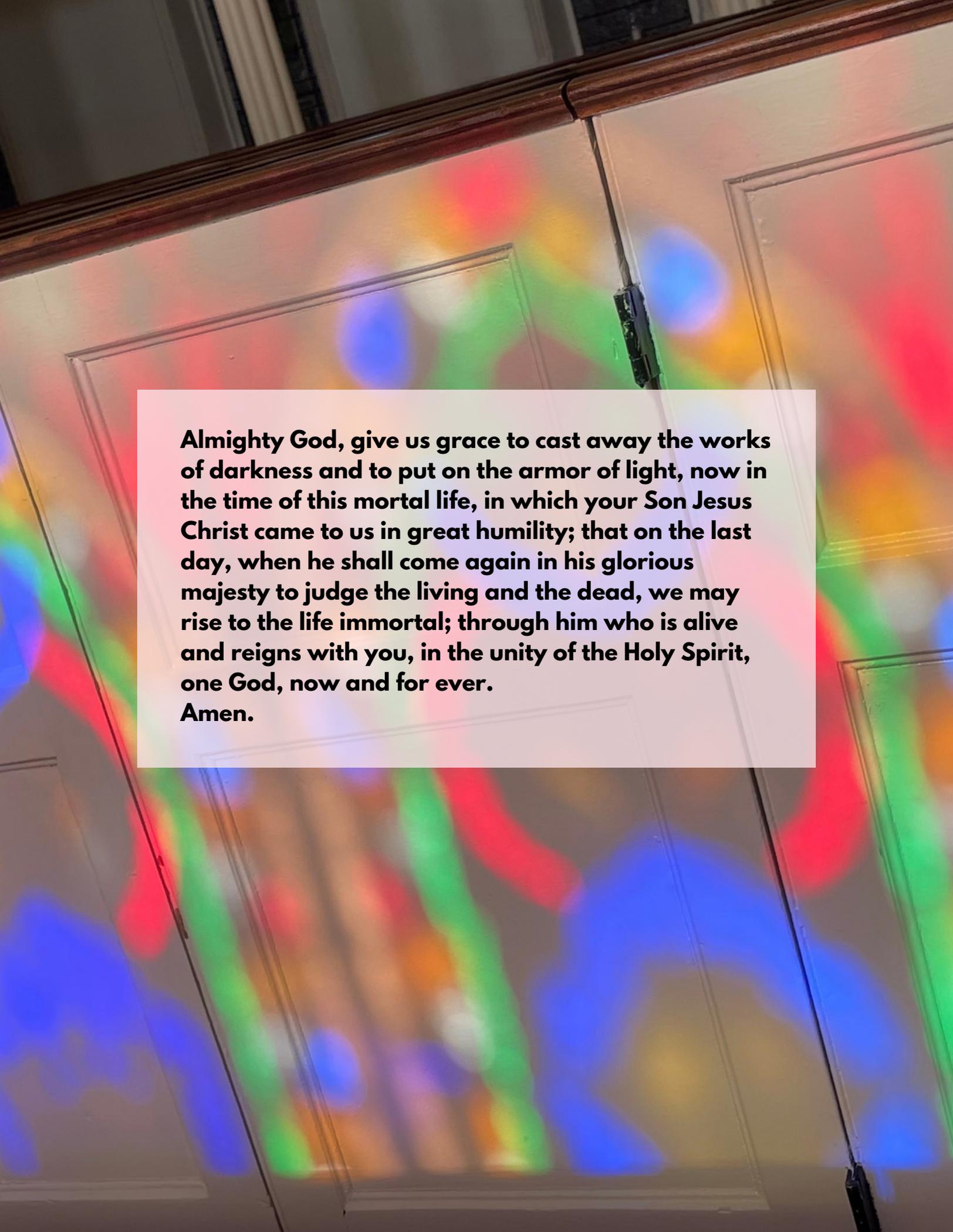
There are days when it can feel like every time you turn around another year is ending. How can we be here again? Wasn't it just yesterday that we rejoiced as the year 2020 came to a highly anticipated halt? Many a Christmas card was sent, mine included, bidding a not-so-friendly farewell to 2020, a terrible year. And yet, almost 365 days later, I think I may have to include a similar sentiment on the 2021 card.

This fall as we set out to create an annual giving campaign theme this feeling of limbo, of having great hope while at the same time still feeling great fear, pervaded the creative process. Plans we made for celebratory regatherings were constantly being altered and curtailed by changing guidelines and rising case numbers. And in this mix of hope and fear we settled on the constant theme of both our lives with God and our shared community experiences at St. Paul's -- faith. Steadfast and constant, our faith in God and our faith in our church home, St. Paul's, is a guidepost in the everchanging moments of our day to day lives. Only with faith in God are we able to say "This is day that the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it", whatever that day might bring.

St. Paul's has stood on the corner of Duke and Pitt Street for nearly 77,380 days, a number that somehow seems both too small and too large. Each one of those days was and is filled with countless moments, big and small, transcendent and mundane. Time spent at St. Paul's is a thread tightly woven into the tapestry of the many memories a life can create. A faithful reminder that God is with us during joyful times of celebration and difficult times of loss and separation. The steadfast support of the people of this place, those here now and those here tens and thousands of days ago, sustain St. Paul's and insure that it will continue to deepen the faith and enrich the lives of parishioners who open its doors for many days to come.

WAYS TO GIVE...

- **Visit www.stpaulsalexandria.com/donate-now**
You can make a year-end gift, complete your 2021 pledge, or make a pledge to support the 2022 Operating Fund. You can also make a gift to a specific ministry in honor of a loved one.
- **Make A Gift of Appreciated Assets**
Gifts of appreciated stock should be initiated by December 24, 2021. Contact Maria Halloran, stewardship@stpaulsalexandria.com, for delivery information you need for the church account at Morgan Stanley.
- **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.
- **Planned Giving**
There are a number of ways to provide for the future of St. Paul's Church while making decisions about your own estate planning. We encourage you to discuss these options with your financial advisor. St. Paul's Foundation Covenant Circle recognizes members who have remembered St. Paul's in their estate planning and who have so notified St. Paul's in writing.



**Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.**

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



www.stpaulsalexandria.com