

The Forum: Sunday Mornings at 10 am in Norton Hall

Grab a cup of coffee and gather with others as we hear from notable speakers and engage in topics at the intersection of faith and life. Come listen, learn, and ask questions. For more information, please contact The Rev. Jenni Ovenstone at jenni@stpaulsalexandria.com. Speakers and themes for this forum year include (*designates intergenerational forums and events:)



September 15

Rector's Forum: "Meet the Team"

Kick off the program year and get ready for the season in store for us in a fun and friendly time of introductions and greetings from the clergy, staff, and seminarians - names and faces both new and well known - who lead and support the people of St. Paul's as we shine as a light in the world to the glory of God!

September 22

Natalie Rose Kress, "Spirituality and Sacred Music"

Natalie is a friend of St. Paul's and a founding member of Relic, a period instrument chamber orchestra that connects with audiences through intimate, imaginative and dramatic representations of early music. Natalie will introduce Relic to us as we participate in their mission of bringing early music to people of different backgrounds and communities across the country (and right here at St. Paul's!) in this program exploring German Sacred music of the Baroque period.

September 29

The Rev. Jenni Ovenstone, "difference: The power of faith in a conflicted world"

Even as faithful people, we may find ourselves struggling to know how to navigate a divided and complex world, longing to make a difference, but often not knowing where to start. Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby has brought together a network of leading practitioners to create "difference," equipping people to cross divides, navigate disagreement, and pursue a just and flourishing world. Through video and discussion, this forum will introduce Archbishop Welby's theology and vision of the power of Christ and the Church to be a transformative, reconciling presence in the world, and preview the "difference" course beginning at St. Paul's in October.

October 6

Episcopal Schools Sunday Celebration*

Observing the National Association of Episcopal Schools "Episcopal Schools Celebration" week, we lift up the ministry of Episcopal schools in general and St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool in particular. All are invited! Look for food, fellowship and a Scholastic book fair in Norton Hall, games in the Wilmer lobby, a pilgrimage walking tour of our preschool starting in the chapel, and a small animal petting zoo in the courtyard!

October 13 | Dyer/Horne Lecture

The Very Rev. Ian Markham, "An Election, Conspiracy Theories, and the American Dream."

The Very Rev. Ian S. Markham is Dean and President of Virginia Theological Seminary. A respected authority within the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion in systematic theology, social ethics, and religious diversity, Markham is committed to nurturing critical thinking Christian leaders, both lay and ordained, who will serve as God's witness to the world. This timely presentation will draw on his current work on a forthcoming book exploring conspiracy theories and faith.

October 20

The Rev. Oran Warder and company, "A View from Mt. Sinai: St. Paul's 2024 Pilgrimage to Egypt"

See and hear memories and reflections from St. Paul's June 2024 pilgrims in a journey through Biblical Egypt, the Coptic Church, and early Christianity.

October 27

St. Paul's Serves*

A hands-on time together to work on service projects that support our outreach and mission partners as we learn about needs and opportunities to serve our wider community.

November 3

Kathy Rockefeller, “Watching Our Youth Resolve Their Own Conflict - A Hopeful Experience!”

Kathy Rockefeller, J.D., is a conflict resolution professional with a passion around transforming traditional school discipline with effective and sustainable Restorative Practices (RP). She serves Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) as a district-wide School Climate Specialist. Drawing on her hands-on work, Kathy will share true stories of seemingly-unresolvable student conflicts in public schools being resolved by the students themselves, with caring facilitation from adults. Our youth are amazing and we can learn a lot from them - if we will only listen!

November 10

The Rev. A. Katherine Grieb, Ph.D., “When the Battle’s Lost and Won’...Where Do We Go From Here?”

Dr. Grieb is an affiliated faculty member at Virginia Theological Seminary and the Director of the Center for Anglican Communion Studies. She takes the title of her forum from Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* and Dr. Martin Luther King’s classic challenge to frame her comments following one of the most fraught elections in United States history. Recognizing that it promises to be a very close election, and the results may not even be clear by November 10, Dr. Grieb will take this moment to talk about what the Church owes the Government in the way of loyalty and respectful critique from a Gospel perspective. The forum will explore key biblical passages and discuss what kinds of civil discourse will move the nation as a whole forward, not just one part of it.

November 17

Scott Broetzmann, “Is the Church Dying? Sentiments from the St. Paul’s Community”

A host of prominent national surveys have suggested that the modern church is in a precipitous decline. What about St. Paul’s? What trends have we observed in our own community? How are we called to strengthen the church at large and here at St. Paul’s? Long-time parishioner Scott M. Broetzmann, President and CEO of Custom Care Measurement and Consulting, will offer reflections on these important questions using insights from St. Paul’s 2024 Census Survey.

November 24

Thanksgiving Parish Brunch*

Newcomers and parishioners of all ages are invited to a light, festive brunch during the formation hour between worship services as we celebrate our many blessings and welcome those who are newer to St. Paul’s.

December 1

Advent Wreath-Making*

The tradition of the Advent wreath helps us prepare for Christmas by marking hope-filled signs of life and light, even in the winter darkness. Make a wreath for your home using fresh greens. Forms and candles available for purchase.

December 8

The Rev. Ross Kane, “The Good News of Church Politics”

When we think about politics we often think about the privileged vying for power, or we might think about gridlock, frustration, or how little our voices seem to matter. Our obsession with statecraft can both paralyze us and lead us to duplicate the tactics of this exasperating form of politics when we lead our church communities. The Rev. E. Ross Kane, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Theology, Ethics, and Culture and Director of Doctoral Programs at Virginia Theological Seminary, has good news for us: church politics doesn’t have to work this way! Ross will draw on his book of the same title, combining Scripture, political theology, and personal experience to reframe politics around shaping our common life and loving our neighbors.

December 15

Laura Francis, Floral Demonstration

Laura Francis, parishioner and member of the Hunting Creek Garden Club, offers a real-time floral demonstration that gives a peek into the history of some of our most beloved Christmas traditions.

December 22

Christmas Carol Sing-Along and Festive Holiday Reception (begins 9:45) *

All are invited to a celebration following our 9 am Christmas pageant to enjoy holiday treats and join in beloved carols led by St. Paul’s musicians.