

February 2025 Messenger



St. Mary's
Arlington

Worship • Outreach • Family • Care

*Commanders, Community and Christ • Parish Wide Art Show
Mary as Theotokas • Sewing with Forozan • Got Faith? • Lenten Offerings*



Commanders, Community and Christ

by The Reverend Andrew T.P. Merrow, Rector

Dear Friends,

While it is true that I have been a devoted professional football fan for almost all of my life, it is also true that the former owner of the team in our nation's capital was instrumental in his awfulness to cause me to cease watching the sport in recent years. I agree wholeheartedly with the sportswriter, Sally Jenkins, who shared that perhaps the best thing about the Commanders' current playoff run is that the aforementioned terrible owner has absolutely nothing to do with it. Some of you will remember that for many years I would have to excuse myself from church a little early one Sunday a season when I clearly heard and felt compelled to respond to the call of "stadium ministry." A major part of my unhappiness with that toxic mess across the River was that it disrupted a primary organizing principle for my life. For decades each calendar year would be divided into 3 parts of uneven length - Ash Wednesday through Easter, preparing to go to New Hampshire in July, and upon returning home, training camp through the Super Bowl that brings us back to Ash Wednesday (this year March 5th). But enough of my complaining and lament.

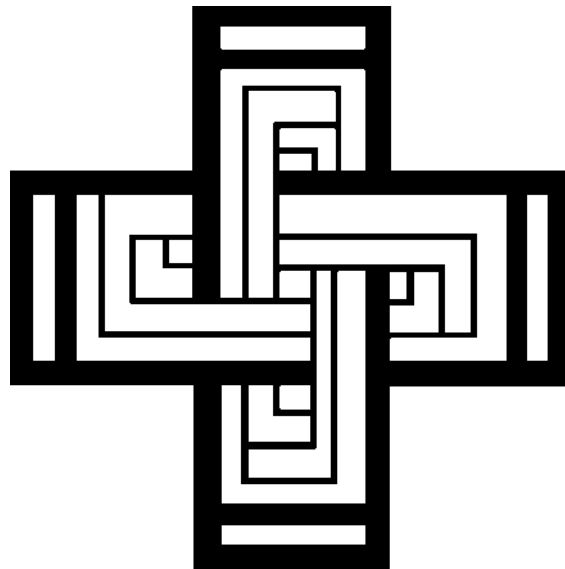
This year's Washington Commanders play a much larger role in our community than a single team's success in making it to the Playoffs. Bigger than the emergence of a star quarterback. Bigger than providing riveting entertainment again, a good reminder that at one level it is only a game after all. I am not alone in arguing that this remarkable turnaround has tapped into something larger. As Christians everything that we are hearing and seeing should remind us of the truth of

I Corinthians 12:12-13:

"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free - and we were all made to drink of one Spirit."

Under constant threat, scrutiny and stress, a season/career ending injury always lurking, being eviscerated on social media for any transgression, athletes of different races, cultures and upbringing have become greater than the sum of their parts. The early Church was a motley collection of the wealthy and powerful and the poor and oppressed. It grappled with what to do with "foreigners" also known as Gentiles. It faced overwhelming odds with a confidence and





Credit: Peter Casey-Imagn Images

conviction that succeeded even when it was defeated. It was said that those Christians turned the world upside down.

It is not lost on me that more than once when asked how all of this success is happening, Jayden Daniels, the rookie superstar quarterback, begins by thanking God. Imagine that. A 24-year-old who could be strutting his stuff instead is unafraid publicly to name his faith in God to millions of viewers. The locker room filled with intensely competitive physical giants seems to be a place where true and deep community is experienced. Owners, managers, coaches, players all working together toward a single goal is a joy to behold.

It seems to me that the church needs always to strive toward that single goal of sharing the love of God made known perfectly in Jesus Christ. Anything that gets in the way of that work needs to be left behind. In Christ we are a new creation.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”

— 2 Corinthians 5:17

Just as players and coaches come and go over time, so do parishioners and clergy.

Yet the vision of becoming a beloved community is absolutely compelling once you get a glimpse of what God has in mind - all people, created in the image of God, coming together in love. Then even the most improbable becomes not just possible, but worth pursuing with every ounce of faith and commitment that we can muster.

May the peace of the Lord always be with you.

Faithfully,

Father Andrew



Father Andrew Merrow has welcomed people into the doors of St. Mary's since 1985.

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Cover photo by Sue Cromer

The Messenger is published monthly by St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Arlington. 2609 N. Glebe Rd., Arlington, VA 22207. Submissions are due by the 20th of the month.
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Contributors: Clergy, Staff, Ministry, and Lay Leaders.
Art Director & Editor: Andrea Meier, Communications.

Candlemas Choral Eucharist Sunday, February 2 at 5 pm

Chili Cook Off follows at 6 pm



Candlemas is a Christian feast day that celebrates the presentation of Jesus in the Temple of Jerusalem. It is celebrated on February 2, 40 days after Christmas, and is also known as a festival of light with the blessing of candles. The Nunc Dimittis (the canticle sung at Choral Evensong), comes from when Simeon's wish was fulfilled when he met the Messiah in the temple (Luke 2:25-38).

[Click here for more information about Candlemas](#)





Dinner proceeds benefit the Youth Mission Trip to do hurricane relief work in New Bern, NC this summer!

Chili

COOK OFF

SUNDAY, FEB. 2ND

CANDLEMAS @5PM

DINNER @6PM

CHILD/YOUTH DINNER TICKET: \$10
ADULT DINNER TICKET: \$25
FAMILY MAX DINNER TICKET: \$75
\$10 FOR 10 EXTRA VOTES
\$20 FOR 25 EXTRA VOTES

Several batches of chili, sides and dessert will be served by youth cooking teams. Cast your vote (and purchase extra votes for your favorite) so that we can award a golden ladel to the winning team!
Purchase tickets in advance online

St. Mary's Episcopal Church
2609 N. Glebe Rd. Arlington, VA 22207
www.stmarysarlington.org

Reserve Tickets today!



INVITATION

TO CELEBRATE AND WORSHIP!

BY SUZANNE STROUP,
VESTRY MEMBER

In a few short weeks, St. Mary's will mark the anniversary of Father Merrow's first day with us forty years ago. As you look around our church today, it's hard to imagine all that has changed since that early day in March, 1985. As Father Merrow recounts that first day, he distinctly remembers meeting Herb and Willette Vogt, St. Mary's treasurer and parish secretary. Well into their late 70's and faithful Episcopalians (they had both been missionaries), the Vogts were a refreshing, honest introduction to St. Mary's.



Herb and Willette Vogt, were
St. Mary's Treasurer & Secretary
in 1985 when Fr. Andrew arrived.

Father Merrow recalls that during those first few days in the office, it was just Willette and him as he learned the ropes, and he could not be more grateful.

One of those first interactions has stayed with him all these many years later. Willette told him, "You know, when the Vestry told me they were going to call you as the rector, I told them, don't let me meet him first because he will not want to come. I will most certainly tell him the truth!" He thought to himself, "Wow, how blessed am I to have this colleague who is so strong, truthful and faithful?" The truth turned out to be something quite amazing. Father Merrow came to

St. Mary's and found a lovely, smaller group of faithful people who had not had the benefit of much leadership for quite some time. Similar to Lent, he said it was almost like these parishioners themselves were in the wilderness - mad, angry and searching. This strong, wonderful spirit, married with Father Merrow's clear and faithful leadership, guided this parish on a 40-year journey towards the thriving, growing, and ever-learning, ever-faithful church that is St. Mary's today.

As we think about MARCH 5th and this upcoming anniversary, we should also realize this will be the beginning of Father Merrow's final two months with us as Rector.

There will be much celebration and time to gather with one another during these months, but perhaps we should all mark this special date as the ever-important beginning of a well-deserved, loving, thankful and heartfelt send-off.

Let's plan to gather on Shrove Tuesday to celebrate this parish "Mardi Gras"-style, with our pancake feast, a few Cajun delicacies, shiny beads and music!

Then, the following day, let's come together again as a church on **Ash Wednesday** to remember from where we, as *followers of Jesus Christ*, have come, and what we need to do to prepare for Lent (and the rest of our faith journey here on Earth). It will be such a special day for St. Mary's as Father Merrow leads us in Ash Wednesday worship.

Mark your calendars today!



SHROVE TUESDAY MARCH 4, 2005

Time: 5:45 pm & 6:30 pm

Two seatings, Sign Up on Hub

Place: Paca Hall

Suggested Donation:

\$5 per person | \$15 for a family



ASH WEDNESDAY

7 am	Holy Eucharist, Chapel
Noon	Imposition of Ashes
5:45 pm	Family Service with imposition of ashes
6:30 pm	Family Dinner (Paca)
7:30 pm	Imposition of Ashes

Meals That Heal

by Rev. Janettarose+

Friends, we are moving *Meals That Heal* to the Meal Train® platform.

Why are we moving to the Meal Train® platform?

We are moving to Meal Train® for several reasons:

- **Meal Train® provides an organized way** to provide meals to church members experiencing illness, grief, new parenthood, or other life events requiring a little extra support. It centralizes the effort, preventing duplicated meals and ensuring the recipient receives consistent nourishment.
- **Showing Community Care:** Offering a meal is a tangible expression of care and compassion, demonstrating St. Mary's commitment to supporting our members during difficult times. Strengthening the bonds within the church community. Fostering a sense of belonging and mutual support. Meal Train® simplifies this act of service.



- **Efficiency and Organization:** Meal Train® streamlines the process of coordinating meal deliveries. It eliminates the need for numerous phone calls, texts, and individual arrangements, making it much more efficient for both the recipient(s) and volunteers.

- **Transparency and Coordination:** It allows for clear communication and coordination between volunteers, ensuring meals are delivered as scheduled, avoiding conflicts and overlaps.

- **Reducing the Burden on Individuals:** Instead of a few individuals shouldering the entire responsibility of providing meals, Meal Train® distributes the task across many members, lessening the burden on any one person.

What is Meal Train®? Meal Train is an organized way for parishioners to deliver home-cooked meals and food/grocery gift cards to church members going through a challenging time. It is a caring way to ensure that the recipient doesn't have to think about grocery shopping or preparing meals while going through a major life event.

Most importantly it can be managed by St. Mary's office administrator, who will when requested send out a link from the St. Mary's Meal Train account to parishioners should a need arise.

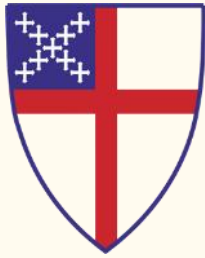
If you need additional information, please contact church administrator Derek Greten-Harrison at 703-529-6800.

St. Mary's Creation Care team wants you to know about **getgreenARLINGTON**

Just Released! Arlington County, in partnership with EcoAction Arlington, has officially launched the GetGreen Arlington mobile app!



Download the GetGreen Arlington App and Get Started Now



St. Mary's Potluck Dinner for Violette Mubarak, General Director of the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre February 21 at 6:00 pm in Paca Parish Hall



Violette Mubarak

On Friday February 21, the St. Mary's community will welcome Violette Mubarak, General Director of the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre (JPBC). Since 2017, our parish pilgrimages to the Holy Land have included a visit to the Basma Centre, which is operated by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. The Centre's work providing rehabilitation care for West Bank children began in the 1960's and has continued to empower parents and children to live fully. By providing a range of physical, occupational, and speech therapies, the team is able to offer holistic care that helps children grow and thrive.

In early 2023, Violette and her team began working on the dream of opening a satellite rehabilitation center in Gaza. With vision, hard work and the power of the Holy Spirit, staff was hired and the new program opened in August 2023 at the Diocese's Al Alhi Hospital in Gaza City. During the months of tragedy and warfare that began in October 2023, the Gaza staff continued to provide rehabilitation care for newly injured and disabled children as they themselves were finding shelter in schools and churches.

Violette often says "we do not give up."

Please come and enjoy an evening of friendship, food, and learning as Violette shares more about the hope in God's unfailing love that inspires the Basma Centre team.

Sign Up on the Parish Hub or use QR code



Let's rejoice together!



St. Mary's pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 2022. Photo courtesy of Cynda Tipple



MARY AS THEOTOKOS

(Part I)

By Rev. Janettarose L. Greene

In her book *Broken Bodies: The Eucharist, Mary and the Body in Trauma Theology*, feminist theologian Karen O'Donnell theorizes that because Mary was conceived immaculately, she was not tainted with "the stain of original sin." O'Donnell makes the argument, however, that the trauma to Mary's body is no less significant because "the Word of God through the power of the Holy Spirit descended into her body and became man or the incarnational activity of the Word of God formed Himself, a body in the womb of Mary." Immaculate or not, this was a somatic event that would impact the body. Body memories like those remembered in the Eucharist cannot be separated from Mary.

I do not believe that the Christian focus on the traumatic events of the crucifixion of Christ is misplaced. However, I do think the Annunciation-Incarnation event should be viewed as a pivotal

traumatic event in Christendom. O'Donnell acknowledges this, and I agree that this is a significant departure from Christian thought. "Allowing the traumatic memory of the body of Christ to be framed in terms of the Annunciation-Incarnation event moves it away from the disruptive power of the cross, causing a rupture in traditional Christian narratives."

THE TWO TRADITIONAL NARRATIVES DERIVE FROM NESTORIUS AND CYRIL.

Nestorius (386-451 CE) was trained in the Antiochene view of the Incarnation, whereby God becoming flesh meant that the divine Son had united with the man Jesus, with Christ who was born of Mary. Hence, 'mother of Christ' was preferable to 'mother of God.' This demotes Christ to the status of mere mortal, one with enhanced and unique abilities but nonetheless a man. As Nestorius saw it, the flesh became God.



The Antiochene perspective enraged Cyril (died 440 CE), the bishop of Alexandria. His uncle Theophilus, the former bishop of Alexandria, trained him to be a wily and pugnacious polemicist, making him a formidable writer and debater. Cyril was of the Alexandrian tradition, which favored the language ‘God became flesh,’ citing John 1:14.

In contrast to Nestorius, Cyril thought it correct to call Mary Theotokos because the divine Son, the eternal Word of God, begotten of the Father from eternity, had become man.

Cyril understood the body of Christ as including the body of the church, and the bodies of

“the divine Son, the eternal Word of God, begotten of the Father from eternity, had become man.”

women as including the Theotokos (O'Donnell, 60). Cyril thought Nestorius' views were heretical. For Cyril then, Nestorius' attack on the use of Theotokos reduced the connection of the Divine and the human in the person of Jesus Christ, which is to reduce the incarnation to an illusory association.

THE VIEWS OF NESTORIUS AND CYRIL WERE DEBATED AND CHALLENGED.

Each man cited specific passages of scripture to make his point. Likewise, each had difficulty accepting the arguments of the other. A point of contention was that the gospels say that Jesus increased in wisdom and stature (Luke 2:52), that he grew tired (John 4:6), and that he suffered pain and died. Nestorius believed that these examples proved Jesus had a divided nature. In Nestorius' view Jesus was half human and half divine. In his Commentary on the Gospel of John, Cyril clearly demonstrated what he considered important in his Christology (O'Donnell, 63). Cyril believed that the Antiochenes had fractured Christ into a dual personality being that acted as Logos-Incarnate, and then in the next moment was merely human. The problem with the Nestorian view is that it is difficult to separate Christ from Mary's body. Cyril thought it more than appropriate to call Mary the mother of Christ Theotokos because he was keenly aware of the significance of the unity and the holistic understanding of the corporate body, in both its imperial and its ecclesial contexts. The Antiochenes and Alexandrians had to find a middle ground to not divide the church into disputing factions.

On Christmas Eve in 432 CE Bishop Paul of Emesa

“On Christmas Eve in 432 CE Bishop Paul of Emesa announced that Mary the Theotokos gave birth to Emmanuel.”



announced that “Mary the Theotokos gave birth to Emmanuel.” However, it wasn't until the following spring that an agreement known as the Formula of Union was signed. This agreement clearly states what Cyril had asserted all along: All the terms used in the Gospels are to be referred to one Person, the one incarnate hypostasis of the Word. The holy Virgin gave birth after the flesh to God, who was united by hypostasis with flesh; therefore, we say that she is Theotokos.

The Formula of Union should have settled the debate. However, four years after Cyril's death, a monk named Eutyches was condemned for teaching that after the Incarnation, Christ was of one nature. In response to this, Pope Leo issued a letter called the Tome to Flavian, the bishop of Constantinople, to argue that “Jesus Christ, the only Son of our Lord, is everlasting together with himself, differing in nothing from the Father because he was born as God from God.” Leo's goal with this letter was to settle the fundamental matter of Christian doctrine once and for all. Due to shenanigans and artful agenda manipulations, however, Leo's letter was not read at the Council of Ephesus as had been planned. It languished for two years and was finally read at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 CE, where it was accepted enthusiastically (Wilken, 169).

This is significant because the Council of Chalcedon constructed a carefully balanced definition of the mystery of Christ as truly God and truly man, consubstantial with the Father and consubstantial with humanity. Like Nicaea in 325 CE and 451 CE, the Council of Chalcedon, the Tome of Leo, and the Alexandrian perspective of Cyril remain essential touchpoints in consolidating Christian doctrine for the Church. The Chalcedonian Definition has proved to have staying power (MacCulloch, 227). The definition remains the accepted manner of viewing and discussing Christ. *(To be continued.)*

February: Black History Month

Hymn of the Month, Hymn No. 676

by The Rev. Janettarose L. Greene and Dr. Gregory Hooker

The phrase "there is a balm in Gilead" comes from Jeremiah 8:22 in the Bible. It's a rhetorical question asking if there's healing available in Gilead, a region known for its medicinal resources. "*There Is a Balm in Gilead*" is a well-known African –American spiritual with a rich history and several interpretations.

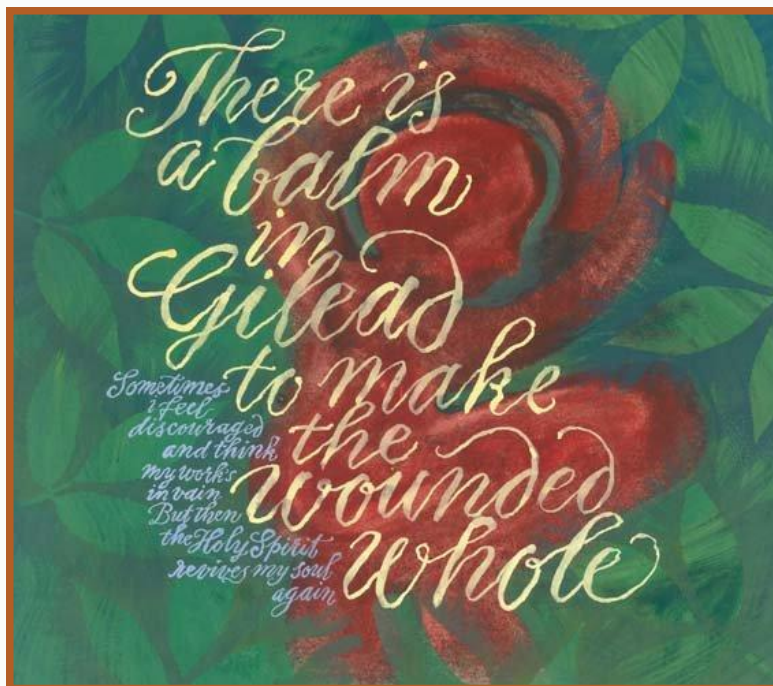
Origins and Antiquity - Its origins are shrouded in mystery, predating written documentation. It is believed to have roots in African American spirituals, possibly tracing back to slavery in the United States. Some scholars suggest connections to even older biblical references (the balm of Gilead mentioned in the Bible, Jeremiah 8:22, is a fragrant resin used for healing). Its origins remain uncertain, but its enduring presence in various cultures speaks to its timeless appeal.

Lyrics and Themes: The lyrics focus on physical and spiritual healing. The "balm in Gilead" symbolizes a remedy for suffering, offering hope and comfort in the face of hardship. The song speaks of redemption, faith, and the power of community to overcome adversity.

Musical Style and Adaptations: The song's melody is simple and memorable, easily adaptable to various musical styles. It has been sung in gospel, blues, and folk traditions, reflecting its broad cultural impact. Many artists such as opera singers Kathleen Battle, Jessye Norman and the Fisk Jubilee Singers have recorded it.

Social and Historical Context: The song's significance in the context of slavery and the struggle for civil rights is undeniable. Its message of hope and healing resonated deeply with those experiencing oppression and injustice. It became a powerful symbol of resilience and faith, providing solace and strength during difficult times.

While the precise origins remain elusive, "*There Is a Balm in Gilead*" is a powerful and enduring spiritual song with deep roots in African American culture and a lasting message of hope and healing. Its history and influence are intertwined with struggles for liberation and the enduring strength of the human spirit.



MUSIC NOTES

by Dr. Gregory Hooker, Music Minister

Nashville was given the Nickname 'Music City' by England's Queen Victoria after receiving the Fisk University Jubilee Singers in her court in 1973. The group, made of mostly those formerly enslaved, put Nashville on the musical map.



Fisk University opened in Nashville in 1866 as the first American university to offer a liberal arts education to "young men and women irrespective of color." Five years later the school was in dire financial straits. George

L. White, Fisk treasurer and music professor then created a 9 member choral ensemble of students and took it on tour to earn money for the University. Every one of these students had been enslaved. The group left campus on October 6, 1871. Jubilee Day is celebrated annually on October 6th to commemorate this historic day.

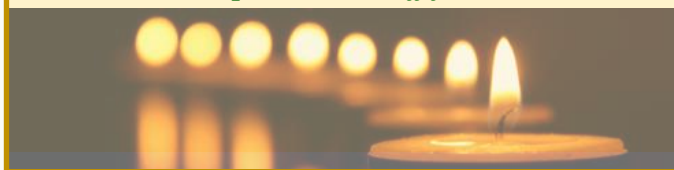
(Instagram: africanarchives)



Fisk University Jubilee Singers, courtesy of africanarchives.com

Hope in Darkness

Sunday, February 2 on the church calendar is the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple or Candlemas. At the 5:00 pm service that day the choir will lead a Choral Eucharist where we will hear the familiar words of the mass (the Gloria, the Sanctus and the Agnus Dei) set to music sung by the choir. This special service will include the blessing of candles and the Song of Simeon who lived in the temple in the expectation of hope that he would see the Messiah before he died. The theme of this service is that in a season of darkness the light of Christ shines forth in hope. Come join us at 5:00 and stay for the Youth Mission Trip Chili Cook off fundraiser.



Worship Offerings on the
First Sunday of the Month
with receptions following the 5 pm services

February 2,
Choral Eucharist at 5:00 pm

March 2,
Choral Evensong at 5:00 pm

April 6,
Sung Compline at 8:00 pm

May 4,
Choral Evensong at 5:00 pm

Sewing with Forozan

By Marjorie Barclay, Outreach

Many Afghan refugee women struggle with their mental health and trauma recovery after immigrating to the US. In addition, the families have trouble finding suitable employment and face difficult economic conditions as a result. Our Parish supported a class, taught by a trained Afghan tailor, which addressed both issues by creating a culturally safe space for women to get out of the home and to learn a valuable skill. The sewing skills taught in the 16-week course will and can lead to an income by doing alterations or enable women to open their own sewing business.

This opportunity came about via St. Mary's community's relationship with Forozan Mirwais and her husband, Attaulhaq Mirwais (aka Mir), who were initially connected to St. Mary's through parishioner Susan Cunningham. Forozan, like the students, left the country she knew to start over in the U.S. with few

SCHOLARSHIPS

Sewing with Forozan scholarships for 2024 are based on attendance. The scholarship level for 2024, including a stipend for supplies, was \$20 per student per week for up to 10 students.

The total amount of scholarships per month is below:

October: \$924

November: \$880

December: \$1,000

Total 2024 scholarships: **\$2,804**

RELATIONSHIP

Marjorie Barclay and Dennis Carter-Chand visited the sewing school in October and had detailed discussions with Attaulhaq Mirwais and Forozan about their plans for the sewing school.

Attaulhaq Mirwais and Forozan participated in the Advent Mart – selling clothing and other items from Afghanistan, as well as providing Afghan food for free.



Afghan Women receive course certificates at graduation. Photo: M. Barclay

resources. The class has been very successful in helping the women to make friends and reduce the stress of adjusting to the stress and isolation of life in a new community.

The community truly came together to make these classes possible in 2024. St. Mary's provided a scholarship for the students based on their class attendance, and a stipend for materials and for sewing machine supplies. This allowed Forozan to continue to offer the classes, for more women to learn skills and for a source of a modest income for Forozan. Fairlington United Methodist Church in Alexandria provided rent-free space sufficient for teaching classes and storing sewing machines and supplies.

NOVA Friends of Refugees, a community group formed to assist refugees in resettling, found a donor for six sewing machines for the classroom and a donor to gift a sewing machine to each of the 11 graduates allowing them to set up a home business immediately. This was truly an inspirational effort on the part of many caring individuals.

On January 9th, Marjorie Barclay and Dennis Carter-Chand had the opportunity to participate in the graduation ceremony for the first graduating class. St. Mary's made graduation certificates for the occasion and everyone enjoyed a

delicious lunch of Afghan food prepared by the graduates.

The class also participated in St. Mary's Advent Mart on Dec 8th selling clothing made by the students and they also had delicious food to give away.

Look for them at next year's Advent Mart!



(above) Clothing made available for sale by Afghan women at the St. Mary's Advent Mart.

World Mission Sunday, March 2

Every year, on the last Sunday of Epiphany, The Episcopal Church recognizes World Mission Sunday. Check out the rich resources of weekly Bible reflections from partners all over the Anglican communion available on the DIOCESE OF VIRGINIA WEBSITE.



**Love Jesus
Embody Justice
Be Disciples**

— THE — PRAYER CORNER

*For the Poor, the Oppressed,
and the Prisoner*

*Almighty and most merciful God,
we remember before you all poor and
neglected persons whom it would be easy
for us to forget: the homeless and the
destitute, the old and the sick, and all
who have none to care for them. Help
us to heal those who are broken in body
or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy.
Grant this, Father, for the love of your
Son, who for our sake became poor,
Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Look with pity, O heavenly Father,
upon the people in this land who live with
injustice, terror, disease, and death as their
constant companions. Amen*

A Prayer for a Meaningful Life

by Jimmy Carter, (1924-2025)

39th President of the United States

*I would like to have my frequent prayer
answered that God let my life be
meaningful in the enhancement of His
kingdom and that my life might be
meaningful in the enhancement of the lives
of my fellow human beings.*

*I call upon all the people of our Nation to
give thanks on that day for the blessings
Almighty God has bestowed upon us, and
to join the fervent prayer of George
Washington who as President asked God
to "impart all the blessings we possess, or
ask for ourselves to the whole family of
mankind."*

*Prayers submitted by Dr. Michelina Bonanno
and taken*

*from Pocketbook of Prayers
M. Basil Pennington*

Got Faith?

By Jackie Ly, Youth and Family Formation Minister



A child in the '90s, I remember vividly the “got milk” commercials and advertisements encouraging me to drink more milk to be strong and healthy. It was catchy and it was convincing, as ads typically are! It got me thinking about a catchy



An ad from the “got Milk” campaign from the past

slogan for what it is that we try to promote or profess through our participation in a faith community.

I wonder how well “got faith” captures what we have to offer? For those of

us who have had to put our faith to the test, we understand how helpful, in fact how **ESSENTIAL our relationship with God is** and how much we must rely on our faith as a guide through hardship and as a comfort when we need it most.

Josh Hayden, a pastor friend of mine, alongside his family and his congregation in Ashland, Va. suffered an immense loss when his 16-year-old son Rowan died tragically in January. I attended Rowan’s funeral to stand with them in this terrible season, and to take a turn holding their pain so that they could honor his life and find beauty in the midst of such sorrow. Pastor Josh’s faith has taught him to surround himself with love, and my faith has taught me to show up in good times and bad, to demonstrate daily how my faith equips me for hardship. I don’t always know what to do or

what to say, but I can stand in community, with grief on display, knowing that grief really is just love with no place to go.

Deep grief can only come from having had a deep love, a sentiment many of us know all too well. I sometimes wonder why God would let us experience such pain and suffering, us, his beloved children. But then I think about Jesus and his suffering, and how on Jesus’ journey to the cross, God watched it unfold knowing the end of the story, knowing that what was in motion could not be stopped. **God didn’t intervene, but rather stood with his son in his suffering.** God shows us God’s love by reminding us that we are never alone. Through prayer, through time spent in quiet conversation with God, and through the communal acts of a faith community, we know that God is with us, God is for us, and God is never going to forsake us, come what may. Through life’s hard moments, we can rest assured that we are cherished and loved.

Now how essential is that!?

In your own life and in your own ups and downs, what sustains you?

Can you confidently say that you’ve got faith?



Have a Mountain Top Experience This Summer!

Shrine Mont *By David Palmer*

Shrine Mont is like a spiritual Disneyland - but better. For over 20 years our family has been enjoying Shrine Mont in various ways. What's maybe best about Shrine Mont is that it appeals to folks in their various stages of life. For example, my wife and I first attended when we were just married and had no kids - and forged some great relationships that exist to this day. Then, when our kids were small, Shrine Mont became a wonderland for them as they could explore all kinds of places and (almost) run free (the tramping of small feet on the porches is a sound I still enjoy). When our boys grew into teenagers, Shrine Mont became a new kind of place for them, including the terrific Shrine Mont camps in the summer. Now that our kids are off at college (I still have trouble writing that sentence...), Shrine Mont is a place where we make new friends (including ones with their own small kids) and find time to deepen existing relationships. Another key attribute of Shrine Mont is the



Ralph Miller, Anne Miller, Robin De la barre and Mary Lew Evers



Dave Palmer and his mother Beverly Palmer are pictured enjoying a meal with Cameron Merrow, Gordon Thomas, Gregory Hooker, Louisa McClanahan, and Lance King.

community with God's creation - be it a hike to the Cross or North Mountain, playing on the grass fields, or sitting on the porch and watching the rain fall. Probably the best part of Shrine Mont is that it allows us to step outside our normal, busy lives and really get to know one another and God. I met one of my favorite St. Mary's people via a random conversation at Shrine Mont and also learned about how interesting our parishioners are (ask Dana Martin about Sheriff Scotty...). For people who have never been to Shrine Mont, I simply tell them - "You gotta go!" It is only two hours away but an entirely different world once you arrive.

Shrine Mont

St. Mary's Parish Retreat

June 6-8, 2025

Questions or Interest in joining the planning Team?
Email Jackie at Jackie.ly@stmarysarlington.org

St. Mary's Youth Confirmation Program



For Confirmation



For Youth Ministry



8th -10th Graders: Register for Youth Confirmation by March 1st and also register for Youth Ministry

- **Requirements:** Shrine Mont Retreat, March 14-16; \$160 per student, free for parent chaperones!
 - Attend all classes that meet 2nd and 4th Tuesdays March-May, and Sept.-Dec., 7:30-8:30pm (attendance is taken, two excused absences given)
 - Regularly attend youth group and church
 - Confirmation will happen in Jan. or Feb. 2026, and each confirmand will join a parish ministry to finish out the 25-26 school year
- Questions and Payment to Youth Minister jackie.ly@stmarysarlington.org

**JUNE
6-8,
2025**



**SAVE THE DATE!
SHRINE MONT
PARISH WEEKEND**



ACTIVITIES

- S'mores by the fire
- Candlelight Compline
- Front porch fellowship
- Children's games
- Walk the Labyrinth
- Take a hike
- Youth kickball
- Corn hole tournament
- Delicious meals
- Relax with a book
- Fish by the pond
- Worship at our outdoor Cathedral



HAVE QUESTIONS OR INTEREST IN JOINING THE PLANNING TEAM? EMAIL JACKIE.



Shrine Mont, Orkney Springs, VA



jackie.ly@stmarysarlington.org

ST. MARY'S ART SHOW

*Greetings, highly favored one!
The Lord is with you.*

Luke 1:28

**Celebrating Mary through
Image and Word**

An all-parish exhibition

**March 2 - Opening reception
following Choral Evensong**



Annunciation, Henry Ossawa Tanner, 1898, Philadelphia Museum of Art

How do you imagine Mary?

The Arts Committee invites you to respond with your images or words.

We welcome entries in a wide range of media.

We only ask that your submission be your own work, not made from a kit.

Click on the QR code to download all the scripture passages featuring Mary and some questions to help you reflect on ways you might depict Mary in word or image.

Some possibilities:

Poems, prayers, meditations | Paintings, drawings, collage, photographs | 3-dimensional pieces |
Quilts, fiber arts | Calligraphy | Beading, mosaic, other crafts

We invite entries from parishioners of all ages.

Please keep these dates in mind: Feb. 15 – Entry forms emailed to Peggy Parker pparker@vts.edu

Feb. 16 – Gathering children's work – Gretel Lynch gretellynch@gmail.com

Jackie Ly will contact parents and teachers with details jackie.ly@stmarysarlington.org

Feb. 22, 2 – 4:30pm - Receiving framed work (by teens and adults) Gretel Lynch
gretellynch@gmail.com

Work by teens and adults should be mounted or framed (inexpensively is fine) and will hang in the Merrow Fellowship Hall exhibition space.

Children through 5th grade can submit their interpretation of Mary on 8.5 x 11" paper by Sunday, Feb. 16 with their name and age written on the bottom corner. No frames, please. All children's submissions will be displayed in the Sunday School Hallway.

Please be pondering your entry!

ART SHOW FRAMING & MOUNTING INSTRUCTIONS

Thanks from the Arts Committee for your interest in entering our spring exhibition.

*We are asking that each entry be mounted (for written pieces) or
framed (for images) and ready to hang..*

Framing – for images

Frames do not need to be expensive. Crafts stores such as Michael's have inexpensive frames in many sizes. If possible, please chose a frame that is designed to hang on the wall (rather than sitting on a desk), since these will be much easier for us to hang.

The information that you submit on your entry form will be printed on a label next to your framed art.

Mounting – for written pieces

Please do not frame your written work. Instead, mount your paper on a piece of foam board. A craft glue stick is the easiest adhesive to use. The stick is often purple, but it dries clear and is washable and non-toxic. Be sure to extend the glue to the edges of your paper so that the paper will lie flat against the foam board.

Please glue a second piece of paper onto the back of the foam board, to keep the board from warping.

We will be using tape to attach these to the wall – so no need for wires or other hanging devices.

The information about your work (your name, title (if any), and date)
should be included on your written work.

Questions about these instructions? Or ways to display other media?

Contact Peggy Parker (pparker@vts.edu)



SCAN QR CODE
FOR ENTRY FORM



Announcements & Save the Date

FIRST 15 Training | Register on Hub

Sat. Feb. 15th, Noon - 2:30 pm

Safety and Preparedness Training for Laypeople, Members and Staff

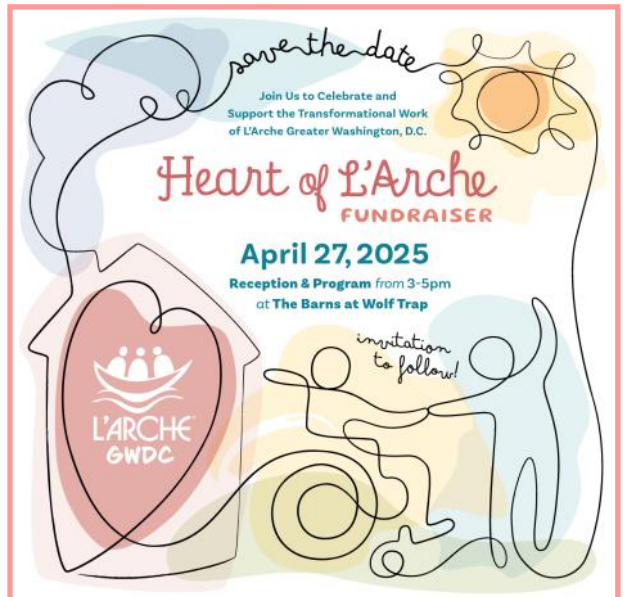
The First 15 is a combined preparedness and response class that empowers residents to be more prepared for emergencies and to provide life-sustaining care to themselves and others while waiting for first responders. The course is tailored for houses of worship, nightclub and restaurant businesses, local non-profits--and every community group in between.


Course Content

In just 2 hours, this free course, delivered onsite by Arlington County Emergency Management, will empower you to:

- Craft an emergency plan tailored to your setting.
- Assemble a life-saving emergency kit.
- Learn best practices for calling 9-1-1.
- Maintain situational awareness.
- Provide psychological comfort to those in distress.
- Practice essential first-aid skills like using tourniquets, positioning the injured, and stopping the bleeding.

For questions, contact Jane.Shafran@stmarysarlington.org or Jackie.Ly@stmarysarlington.org.




YOU'RE INVITED TO

ST. MARY'S WOMEN'S NIGHT OUT

TO CELEBRATE

FUN, FRIENDSHIP & FELLOWSHIP

FEBRUARY 15
6:00 - 9:00 PM

Please bring an appetizer or beverage to share. We look forward to seeing you there!

HOME OF RIDGELY BENJAMIN

KINDLY RSVP ON THE PARISH HUB
You can reach Ridgely directly at
703.582.3215 or ridgelybenjamin@gmail.com

Adult Sunday Faith Forums

February 2

*Funding the Future Tithe,
with Members of Vestry*

February 9

*Bishop Rose N. A. Okeno,
Diocese of Butere, Kenya*

February 16

*Dr. Stephen Cook's presentation on
intersections between scripture and art*

February 23

*Reception for Bishop Harris after 8/
Reception for Newly Baptized after 10 a.m.*

March 2

*World Mission Sunday:
Updates on our all mission partner parishes*

March 9

What is our Hope? Part 1

March 16

What is our Hope? Part 2

March 23

Triangle of Hope, Rev. Janettarose Greene

March 30

*Oral History of the Renewing of St. Mary's
Part 1 - Early Years, Fr. Merrow*

April 6

*Oral History of the Renewing of St. Mary's,
Part 2 - The Exile to Rivendell, Fr. Merrow*

April 13

Palm Sunday Fellowship

April 20

Easter Sunday Receptions

April 27

Annual Meeting of the Parish

May 4

Reception on Fr. Merrow's last Sunday

FEBRUARY FORUMS

February 2

Funding the Future with the Vestry
Come and listen to the Vestry discuss how they are currently discerning options for St. Mary's Funding the Future tithe. The intention of the tithe is to impact systemic change. Come hear from four ministry leaders who will present on how the tithe can support systemic change in their ministry.

The four ministries presenting are:

- Culmore Clinic
- Santa Maria
- Shrine Mont
- Agriculture in Tanzania

February 9

*Bishop Rose N. A. Okeno,
Diocese of Butere, Kenya*

February 16

*Dr. Stephen Cook's presentation on
intersections between scripture and art*

This adult forum will go exploring the visual interpretation of Scripture through the lens of the prophet Jeremiah. Led by VTS professor and St.

Mary's parishioner Stephen Cook, this session will examine how artists including Rembrandt, Marc Chagall, Martin van Meytens, Claus Sluter, Donatello, and Michelangelo help to bring Jeremiah's prophetic witness to life. "Visual interpretation" helps us see both scripture and masterworks of art in powerful new ways. Whether you are an art lover, a Bible student, or simply curious, this forum will deepen your spiritual vision. All are welcome!

*Dr. Cook is the Catherine N. McBurney
Professor of Old Testament Language and
Literature at VTS.*



FEBRUARY**Feb. 2 The 4th Sunday after the Epiphany**

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Sunday School/Youth Formation
 Coffee hour & Adult Formation
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 10:15 am, Wilderness Church at Park
 11 am, Coffee hour
 11:30 am-1pm, Foundations of Faith
 2 pm - 3:30 pm, WTMP (1st of 8)
 5 pm, Candelmas Choral Eucharist
 6 pm, Chili Cookoff

Feb. 9 The 5th Sunday after the Epiphany

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Sunday School/Youth Formation
 Coffee hour & Adult Formation
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 11 am, Coffee hour
 11:30 am-1pm, Foundations of Faith
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

Feb. 15 First 15 Training, Noon to 2:30 pm
In Paca Hall, register on Hub

Ladies Night, 6-9 pm
 Home of Ridgely Benjamin
 register on Hub

Feb. 16 The 6th Sunday after the Epiphany

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Sunday School/Youth Formation
 Coffee hour & Adult Formation
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 10:15 am, Wilderness Church at Park
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

Feb. 17 President's Day, Offices Closed

Feb. 22 Rehearsal for Bishop's Visit

Feb. 23 The 7th Sunday after the Epiphany

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Sunday School/Youth Formation
 Coffee hour & Adult Formation
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 Bishop Gayle Harris Visits St. Mary's for
 Receptions, Baptism & Confirmation
 11 am, Bishop's Reception
 with Cake at Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

**MARCH****Mar. 2 The 8th Sunday after the Epiphany**

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Sunday School/Youth Formation
 Coffee hour & Adult Formation
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 10:15 am, Wilderness Church
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Choral Evensong
 6 pm, Reception and Parish
 Art Show Opening

Mar. 4 Shrove Tuesday
Celebrate Fr. Andrew's
40th year serving St. Mary's
5:45 and 6:30 pm seatings
Register on the Parish Hub!**Mar. 5 Ash Wednesday**

7 am Holy Eucharist, Chapel
 Noon, Imposition of Ashes
 5:45 pm, Family Service with
 imposition of ashes
 6:30 pm, Family Dinner (Paca)
 7:30 pm, Imposition of Ashes

Mar. 7 5 pm, Stations of the Cross**Mar. 9 The 1st Sunday of Lent**

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Sunday School & Youth For-
 mation
 Coffee hour & Adult Formation
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 11:15 am, Luau Reception for
 Jackie Ly and Adrian Vigil
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

Mar. 14 5 pm, Stations of the Cross**Mar. Confirmation Retreat at Shrine Mont 14-16****Mar. 16 The 2nd Sunday of Lent**

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Sunday School/Youth Formation
 Coffee hour & Adult Formation
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 10:15 am, Wilderness Church
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

Mar. 21 5 pm, Stations of the Cross**Mar. 21-23 Middle School Diocesan Retreat at Shrine Mont****Mar. 22 Lenten Clean Up Day, 9 am - Noon****Mar. 23 The 3rd Sunday of Lent**

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Sunday School/Youth Formation
 Coffee hour & Adult Formation
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

Mar. 28 5 pm, Stations of the Cross**Mar. 29 Lenten Quiet Day, 9 am - Noon****Mar. 30 The 4th Sunday of Lent**

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Sunday School/Youth Formation
 Coffee hour & Adult Formation
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

**MIDWEEK SERVICES
ALL YEAR****TUESDAY**

Noon Day Prayer, Chapel
 7:30 pm, Centering Prayer
 (1st & 3rd, Chapel
 2nd & 4th, Zoom)

WEDNESDAY

7 am, Holy Eucharist

THURSDAY

11 am, Healing and
 Holy Eucharist

Wilderness Church

Meets at Zachary
 Taylor Park

Nursery Available Sundays

8:30am-11:30 am
 Summer hours: 9:30 am - 11:30

APRIL

Apr. 6 The 5th Sunday of Lent

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Sunday School/Youth Formation
 Coffee hour & Adult Formation
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 10:15 am, Wilderness Church
 11 am, Coffee hour
 11:15 am, Acolyte Ministry Celebration
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said
 8 pm, Compline

Apr. 13 Palm Sunday

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Coffee hour & Fellowship
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 10:15 am, Wilderness Service at Park
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

**Apr. 14-16 8 pm, Tenebrae****Apr. 17 Maundy Thursday,**

7:30 pm - 9 pm,
 followed by all night vigil

Apr. 18 Good Friday,

7 am, Noon-3pm,
 5:45 pm Family Service, 7:30 pm

Apr. 19 Holy Saturday

9 am, Proper Liturgy followed by
 Communion Preparation Class

Apr. 20 Easter Sunday

5:30 am, Easter Vigil
 8:30 am, Family Service in Paca Hall
 9:30 am, Holy Eucharist
 11:30 am, Holy Eucharist

**Apr. 26 Rebuilding Together, 8am-4pm****Apr. 27 The 2nd Sunday of Easter**

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Sunday School/Youth Formation
 9 am, ANNUAL MEETING (Paca)
 10 am, Holy Eucharist & Holy Baptism
 w/music
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

MAY

May 2 Fr. Andrew Merrow's**RETIREMENT PARTY**

5:30 pm– 9:00 pm

The Hendry House

2411 N. 24th St.

Arlington, VA 22207

**May 4 The 3rd Sunday of Easter****Father Andrew's last Sunday**

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Family Service
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Choral Evensong

May 11 The 4th Sunday of Easter**& Mother's Day**

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am Sunday School/
 Youth Formation
 Coffee hour & Adult Formation
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

May 18 The 5th Sunday of Easter**Youth Sunday**

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 9 am, Last Day for of Youth &
 Children's Fromation
 w/ a Sunday School
 egg hunt
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 10:15 am, Wilderness Church
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

May 25 The 6th Sunday of Easter

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

JUNE

June 1 The 7th Sunday of Easter

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 10:15 am, Wilderness Church
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

June 6-8 Parish Weekend at Shrine Mont**June 8 Day of Pentecost / Whitsunday**

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Choral Evensong

June 15 The 1st Sunday after Pentecost

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 10:15, Wilderness Church
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

June 19 Juneteenth**June 22 The 2nd Sunday after Pentecost**

Youth Group leaves on Mission Trip for
 New Bern, North Carolina

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said

June 29 The 3rd Sunday after Pentecost

8 am, Holy Eucharist, said
 10 am, Holy Eucharist w/music
 11 am, Coffee hour
 5 pm, Holy Eucharist, said





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The Reverend Deacon Greg Williams
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Tom Welch, VTS Seminarian,
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Deborah Gandy, Volunteer Treasurer

Dennis Carter-Chand, Outreach Coordinator
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THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF VIRGINIA

The Right Reverend E. Mark Stevenson
Bishop of Virginia

The Right Reverend Gayle Elizabeth Harris
Assistant Bishop of Virginia

The Right Reverend James Joseph "Bud" Shand
Visiting Bishop

ST MARY'S VESTRY

Colleen Mason (2025) *Sr. Warden*

Chris Jennings (2026) *Jr. Warden*

David Smith (2025) *Register*

Jim Bicksel (2025)

Alec Hicks (2026)

Melissa Wiley (2026)

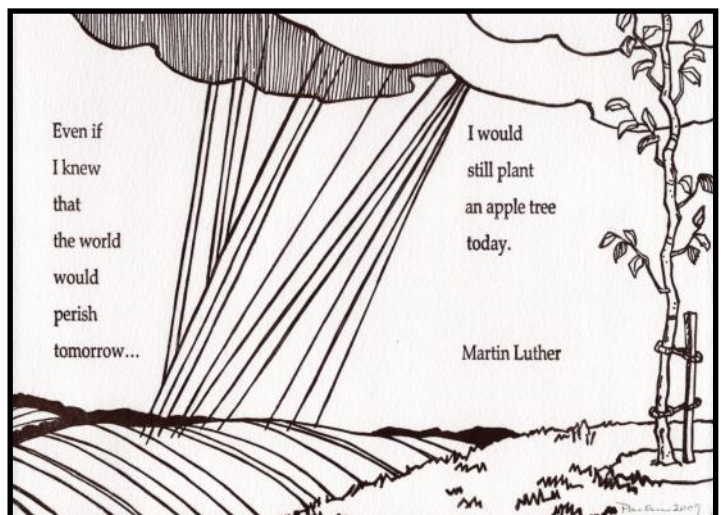
Michael Devine (2027)

Campbell Hutton (2027)

Suzanne Stroup (2027)

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Iamerica.org/know-your-rights/



Artist: Peggy Parker