



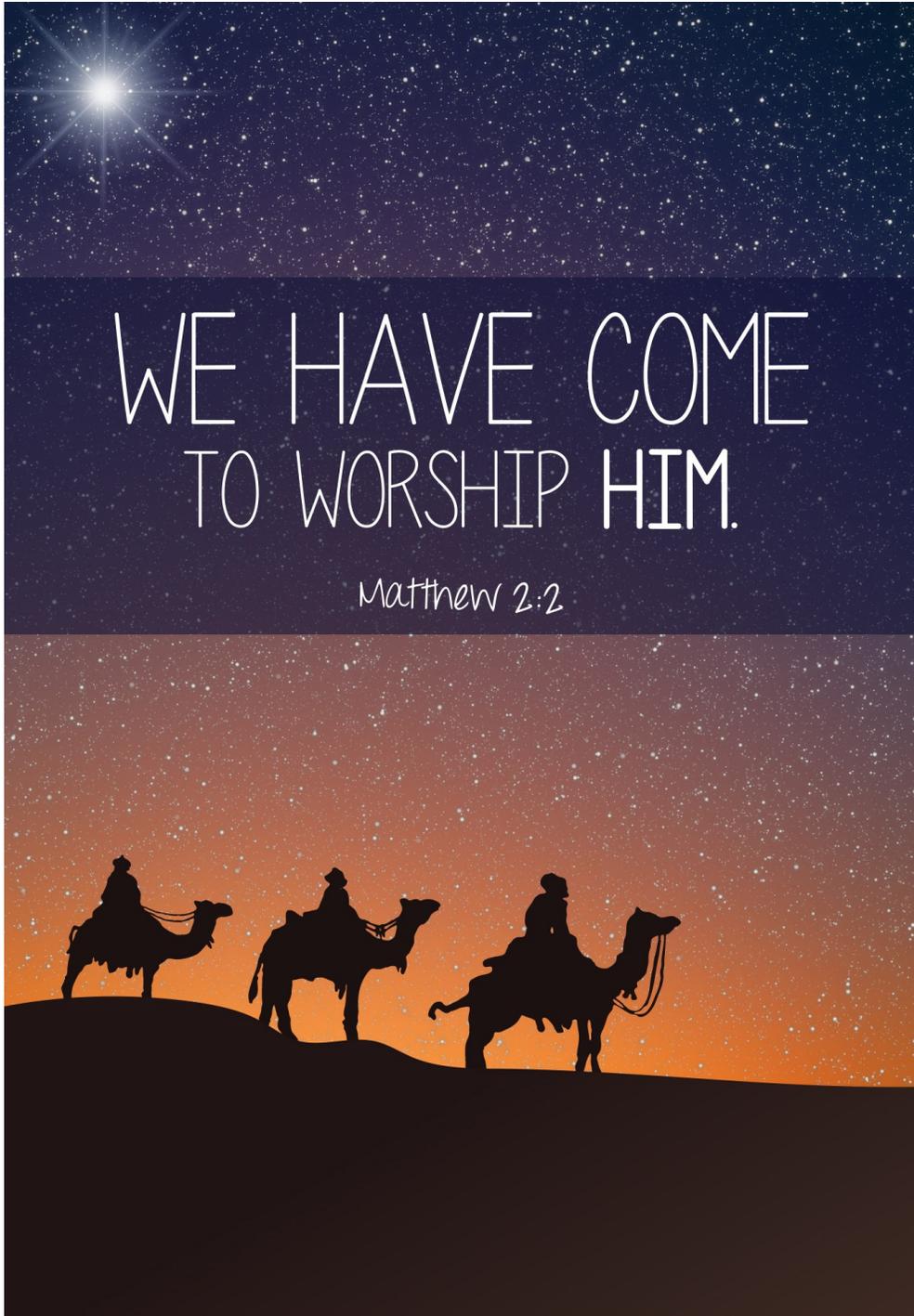
**AQUIA**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Cross Section

*All of you are Christ's body, and each one is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:27*

WE HAVE COME  
TO WORSHIP HIM.

Matthew 2:2





## CROSS SECTION

### Aquia Episcopal Church

2938 Jefferson Davis Hwy.  
P.O. Box 275  
Stafford, VA 22555

#### Contact us:

(540) 659-4007  
office@aquiachurch.org  
www.aquiachurch.org

#### Office hours:

8 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Monday– Friday,  
except Tuesdays (closed)

#### Rector

**The Rev. Jay Morris**

#### Assistant Rector

**The Rev. James Rickenbaker**

#### Treasurer

**Chris Arey**

#### Music Director

**Trystan Bennett**

#### Dir. Christian Education

**Kristen Morgan**

#### Parish Administrator

**Dennise LaBarre**

#### Executive Assistant

**Sue Selz**

#### Nursery Supervisor

**Christine Hammer**

#### Nursery Assistant

**Dawna Spaulding**

## FROM THE RECTOR

### Why Advent?

The season of Advent is often misunderstood. Advent is not simply the shopping season for Christmas gifts, nor is Advent primarily when the church uses blue hangings at the pulpit and altar, when we curiously throw that one pink candle amidst the blue candles in the Advent wreath, and when we see greenery in the windows instead of flowers. Closer to the truth, Advent is partly a season for preparing for the joy of Christmas; yet obviously we are not waiting for the baby Jesus to be born all over again. So why do we observe Advent?

We Christians have known for centuries that God became human in the conception and birth of Jesus, and we celebrate his first coming to the world at Christmas. But Jesus did even more than get born, preach and teach and heal, die for the sins of the whole world, be raised from the dead, and return to his heavenly home (as if that weren't enough!). Jesus also promised that he will return to us—at his second coming, near the end of time—at which point he will judge the living and the dead (as we state in the creeds). Trusting that Jesus will keep his commitment to us, Christians have been waiting for his return. Accordingly, Advent is the portion of the church year when we do exactly that: we wait—patiently and eagerly, but never idly—for Jesus' second coming.

You can see this for yourself in the Scripture lessons that are used in worship during Advent (found on the website [www.LectionaryPage.net](http://www.LectionaryPage.net)). You can hear

this for yourself in the Collects (the prayers that set the tone for each Eucharist) and in the Proper Preface during the Eucharist—and you can read them for yourself, too (see BCP 159-160, 211-212, 345, 378). Only on the fourth and final Sunday of Advent do any of the Scripture readings deal directly with the birth of the babe of Bethlehem. None of the Collects for Advent mention anything about celebrating Christmas, much less shopping or decorating for it; but all four Collects for Advent mention our need to get ourselves ready for Jesus' second coming. The Proper Prefaces for Advent (which specify the particular motivations for celebrating the Eucharist throughout this season) affirm that we want to face the returning Jesus “without shame or fear,” so that we can really rejoice when he finally arrives. But we cannot really rejoice when Jesus returns unless our hearts and lives have first become clean and pure, and we want to be able to withstand his judgment about how we have lived.

The preparation we need before we can face the judgment by Jesus is what prompts Advent's attention to repentance from sin and reforming our lives. During Advent, our worship is rearranged precisely to help us. We begin our Advent worship with words of assurance that God loves us, even as he expects us to leave our sinning behind. We hear early on about the high calling we have as Christians to imitate Jesus' holiness and humility. We confess our sins at the outset of the service—rather than after the sermon, creed, and prayers like usual—so that we can be refreshed by everything that comes afterward. We receive hope that we can live faithfully to God and to each other. We don't even sing Christmas music at church until Christmas is practically here, so that instead we can focus throughout Advent on what Advent stresses: our need for a clean slate and new beginning in our lives, so that we can be ready to meet our Lord Jesus as our Judge.

*Jay Morris*

A LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS



## FROM THE ASSISTANT RECTOR

### Solemn Advent, Joyful Christmas

Dear Family in Christ, Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank our God for you, especially for the manner in which you live into the different seasons of the church calendar. This ability to live into the liturgical calendar helps to promote in the church a sense of the biblical narrative and of salvation history, which in turn gives us the ability to participate in the story. For this is our story.

It has become increasingly common on radio stations and in malls to hear Christmas music played from Nov. 1st through Christmas Day. On Dec. 26th, however, Christmas is over. The decorations come down and we are ready for Valentine's Day (another Christian feast that has been co-opted for commercialism and self-indulgence). The secular observance of Christmas is centered on philanthropic action and, at least in part, on family. This type of observance is common, endearing, and anything but Christian. For us as Christians, we have different seasons of the liturgical year to teach us our story and to evoke within us a response to that story. I would not presume to speak for every Christian, but I have a hard time believing that hearing "Santa Baby" or "All I Want for Christmas is You" over and over on the radio gives one a sense of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Christian response to the time in which we find ourselves is different. Advent takes us through the majority of December. This season is one of penitence and preparation. It is a time wherein we focus on the reality of our sin and how little our feeble attempts to make things right avail before God. It is a time to clean house in our lives, making a special effort to walk away from our sinfulness and to walk instead toward God in faith. Advent reminds us that we cannot become righteous on our own. God had to take on human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, in order to teach us how to live, to die for our sins, and to rise again for our redemption.



The climax of our story began with the birth of our Savior. So, during Advent we reflect in earnest on the first coming of our Lord as we await his second coming. Penitence is a necessary component for that. We are required as Christians to turn away from those things that draw us away from God, hence the reason why the church fasts during Advent.

But Advent does not last forever. We fast to feast. We prepare so that we can celebrate. When Christmas Day comes, we celebrate the birth of Jesus in the same moment that we celebrate the day of his return. We look forward in Advent. We celebrate at Christmas. That celebration lasts longer than just the day. It is a twelve-day season. It lasts all the way until we celebrate the arrival of the wise men, representing Jesus' manifestation to the Gentiles.

Christmas is not just a day for philanthropy or family. Those are wonderful, but Christmas is more. It is a season of hope for our final redemption and joy in the birth of our Savior. Live into Advent and Christmas this year. Enjoy the music (if you do), but remember our story and participate in it fully this year. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

*In Christ+,  
Fr. James*



### AQUIA CHURCH VESTRY

**Dickie Boes**

*Finance Committee Chairperson*

**Curt Bradford**

**Bob Brandon**

*Junior Warden*

*Building & Grounds*

*Committee Chairperson*

**Jackie Chichester**

**Jean Golas**

*Administration*

*Committee Chairperson*

**Joseph Howard**

*Senior Warden*

**Doug McGinty**

*Register*

**Mary Nixon**

**Gary Perkins**

**Ethan Shoen**

*Youth Representative*

**John Sondermann**

*Assistant Register*

**Kathy Trevarthen**



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## FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

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It is hard to believe that the “New Year” of 2018 is quickly drawing to a close. As such, this will be my final article submitted for publication in our newsletter as senior warden to the Aquia Episcopal Church Vestry. For some reason, I can’t hear the raucous round of applause, the shouts of joy, and the exclamations of “Thank Goodness”!! Usually when I tell a group of friends, neighbors, colleagues or relatives that it is “**THE LAST TIME I AM GOING TO DO**” something, you can hear the applause and expressions of joy into the surrounding jurisdictions. Oh, the reason I can’t hear all of that is because you are too kind and polite.

Actually, it would be my hope to be able to gather all my skill, experience, and writing ability to be able to present you with a memorable literary gem that would touch home with each member of our parish family to excite you about the year ahead in 2019 at Aquia. However, after having that hope and then sitting down to compose this article, reality sets in, and I find myself presenting a few random thoughts of mine that I do hope will be of interest to you.

At this time of year, with Thanksgiving and Christmas approaching, it is a good thing to think about Christian charity. It is unfortunate that a lot of



times today in our society the season of Thanksgiving is forgotten. We all have a lot to be thankful for, based on all the blessings God has given us throughout our lives. As a result, we can show Christian charity through the many ministries at Aquia. Supporting Aquia helps to show love and charity to our neighbors, loving them as we love ourselves. Aquia provides significant support to the poor and needy. The special giving events during this season provide opportunities to help directly those who are in need.

The level of one’s resources is not important in the realm of Christian charitable giving. We all have something we can give, in one form or another. Each week we repeat that “All things come from Thee, O Lord, and of Thine own have we given Thee.” I truly believe that, based on my life’s experience. What matters is our priority and our participation.

I read an article recently entitled “They Brought Their Boats.” The arti-

cle was about the terrible devastation Hurricane Harvey caused along the Texas coastal regions. The flooding was so extensive and widespread that the emergency services and responders were overwhelmed. The call went out for anyone with a boat to come to the area of greatest need to save those who were trapped and in danger of being killed by the surging water. The response was tremendous, with all levels of boats and boaters appearing to help, regardless of the size of their boat. Thereafter these boaters were referred to as the “Texas Navy.” They saved hundreds of lives. The size of their resources did not matter. They participated in the charitable act of loving and saving their neighbors, which was their priority, even though they themselves could be put into danger due to the flood. They brought their boats. I suggest that we can all bring our metaphorical boats to the altar as we respond to the needs of Aquia Episcopal Church, whatever level of resources we may be blessed with having.

Where is your priority?

Thank you for everything you have done, are doing, and will do in the future in support of the ministries of Aquia Church.

*Joe Howard*

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## FROM THE TREASURER

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**TAX REMINDER**

### Monetary Contributions

Monetary contributions for 2018 must be received by the church by Dec. 31, 2018, or be postmarked by Dec. 31, 2018. Contributions, such as checks which are dated in 2018 but which are received after Dec. 31 or postmarked after Dec. 31, will be counted towards 2019.

After Dec. 31, 2018, for in-kind donations that were made during 2018, but that have not previously been identified, parishioners are asked to provide the receipts to the office as soon as feasible. In the event that end-of-year statements are already produced by the church office, the Treasurer will provide a separate statement for these in-kind donations.

*Chris Arey*



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## EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

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The Aquia Church branch of the ECW of the Diocese of Virginia invites our parish family to join us on Dec. 16th in the great hall at 9 a.m. for our ECW's Annual Meeting. We will be hosting the hour of fellowship with a brunch reception before the 10 a.m. service. The short business meeting of the ECW will include the introduction of our 2018 "Gift of Life" honorees: Leslie Bourne, Holly Emery, Christine Hammer, and Jennifer Stoltz. We honor them in this tradition of thanksgiving, as they continue to work long and tirelessly for the good of our parish. Their deeds do not go unnoticed, and we joyously celebrate their faith and service to our parish and our Lord. A contribution will be made to the ECW of the Diocese of Virginia in their honor and their names recorded permanently and kept on record at Mayo House, our diocesan headquarters.

As we move forward into the new year, I hope you will give thought to joining us in our ministry here at Aquia. We invite all women to share in the ministry and mission and enjoy the fellowship of ECW. I can be contacted through my e-mail address ([bkwings\\_n\\_things@yahoo.com](mailto:bkwings_n_things@yahoo.com)) with any questions. In sharing your time and talents, we are all enriched. Sts. Mary and Marthas Guild meets the first and third Thursdays monthly for study and reflection. Sts. Mary and Martha time is also divided between service to our parish and community. On the fifth Thursday of a month, our service projects encompass the needs of our campus. There is always a lot to share and do as we unite in the service of our Lord. The ministry of Aquia's Care Team is supported by the women of ECW. We coordinate meals to our parish families, assist in appointments, and support Aquia's other ministries.



As we work in service with joy, it is important we ask for God's blessing and give him thanks:

*Almighty God, we pray that You will bless our work in mission and ministry in the world. We give thanks for the gifts of joy and wonder to be found in Your works. Make us so thankful for the power of Your love, given through Your Son, Jesus, that we may pray, labor and give liberally to make known that love throughout the world.*  
[from the *Prayers for Episcopal Women*]

**Briget Kane**  
ECW President

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## ST. MARY AND MARTHA

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### Worship, Service and Fellowship

Do you need a last-minute Christmas gift or a set of candles for your Advent wreath? Would you like an Aquia Church ornament for your own tree? During all four Sundays of Advent, come to the Great Hall and see what we have to offer on our ECW gift table. There you will find a lovely assortment of handmade Christmas ornaments and wreaths along with Aquia Church gold ornaments, note cards and cookbooks, sets of Advent wreath tapers, plus blessed wax angels and star candles made from Aquia Church altar candle stubs. We also have a delicious offering of jars of homemade jams and jellies.

During the months of December and January, Sts. Mary and Martha Guild will continue with its traditions of worship, service, and Christ-centered fellowship. On Dec. 6th, the guild plans to visit the residents of Parker Adult Care Home on Shelton Shop Road. This

small assisted-living home has sixteen residents who look forward to our twice-a-year visits. We hope to brighten their morning with carols and hymns, cookies, and a couple games of Bingo. All parishioners are welcome to join us.

On Thursday, Dec. 20th, we will enjoy Morning Prayer together, but forgo a craft in order to spend a bit more time on an Advent study as we prepare our hearts and minds for Christ's second coming. We will also wrap gifts we have purchased for three residents of a local nursing home, which is a long-time ECW tradition that has been handed to our guild from the Aquia Chapter.

In January our meetings fall on the 3rd, 17th, and 31st. We shall continue to read our study book, [The Purpose Driven Life](#) by Rick Warren, and we will get started on the crafts for Fall Fest 2019!



If you can join us for any of the above occasions, please do so! We treasure our friendships with our sisters in Christ founded in our guild and welcome any who seek a morning of women's fellowship. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Denise Thornton ([neisieb@aol.com](mailto:neisieb@aol.com)) or Mary Jane Cole ([maryjane@cfsw.biz](mailto:maryjane@cfsw.biz)).

P.S. Dec. 31, 2018, will be the last day that we will be collecting pop tabs. Please leave your last donation of aluminum can pull tabs on the coat rack in the foyer of the great hall. The tabs will be delivered to the Ronald McDonald House in Falls Church in early January.

**Mary Jane Cole**



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## Where is the Diocese of Virginia Going?

Through various messages from the Diocese of Virginia and announcements from Aquia Church, you have probably noticed that there are some things moving and shaking for our diocese. You might also wonder how those changes affect our parish, especially when Aquia has become increasingly involved with our diocese.

The most significant change is the recent retirement of our diocesan bishop, the Rt. Rev. Shannon Johnston, and the fallout from that. Back in May, Bishop Shannon announced that he was starting to consider retiring sooner than he was originally planning; then in August, he announced that he would retire during the time of the diocesan convention in November 2018. That rapid sequence left no time for the diocese to begin the search process for a bishop coadjutor or a new diocesan bishop. In August the diocese began to look for a provisional bishop (someone who is already a bishop, whether actively serving or retired) who could come in to lead our diocese for perhaps three years, much like an interim rector can lead a parish during a time of transition. Yet just before convention, we learned that all of the finalists for provisional bishop had withdrawn from consideration, by their own volition; convention was thus unable to fill this position, and now that search process will resume all over again.

Meanwhile, our full-time bishop suffragan (the Rt. Rev. Susan Goff in Richmond) and our part-time bishop associate (the Rt. Rev. Robert Ihloff, retired as the diocesan bishop of Maryland and still living in Baltimore) remain to provide leadership. Soon after the announcement about Bishop Shannon's retirement, the diocese added that Bishop Goff would continue in her current role (because a bishop suffragan cannot automatically become the diocesan bishop when there is a vacancy—thus not like a U.S. vice-president becoming president when the president dies or resigns). Then in November, Bishop Goff announced that she would

not allow her name to be considered for election as our next diocesan bishop, whenever that election might occur.

Furthermore, there have been some major staff changes at Mayo House, the diocesan headquarters in Richmond. Earlier this year, the canon to the ordinary (who is the diocesan bishop's key assistant for working with other clergy) moved to Tennessee, and he was replaced on an interim and part-time basis by the Rt. Rev. Ted Gulick, who had just retired last year from his position as our assistant bishop. In late October 2018, Bishop Shannon's executive assistant left her post for another opportunity. Within a month afterward, the diocesan chief of staff announced his own retirement, effective at the end of November. These transitions do not have to be related to the departure of Bishop Shannon, and they could have been as inevitable as independent; but these vacancies do leave behind some big shoes to be filled. And permanent replacements for them probably cannot occur until there is more clarity about new leadership at the level of bishop.

Additionally, when Bishop Shannon announced the prospect of his retiring sooner than he had initially planned, he acknowledged that "serious questions have been brought forward by members of the diocesan staff having to do with the leadership and the culture among diocesan staff," and he expressed his hope for outside consultants to propose changes that would help "the staff as a culture and system [to] become fully functional again." That is an explicit admission that the diocesan staff as a group faces some real difficulties in its work environment, even if we do not know what those difficulties are. And the diocese's preferred consultants have decided not to mediate or facilitate the situation.

Besides all that: among the many reports received at diocesan convention was a candid declaration by diocesan treasurer Ted Smith about the need for substantive change in the operating re-

lationship between the diocese and the Trustees of the Funds (TotF is an independent organization related to the diocese that serves as an investment management vehicle for the three Episcopal dioceses in the commonwealth of Virginia and their constituent parishes and institutions, including some of Aquia Church's own assets). While we have been assured that there have been no accusations of impropriety or anything illegal or immoral, there have been more than mere differences of opinion between the diocese and TotF. Throughout most of 2018, there have been extensive discussions among various diocesan leaders about their concerns with how TotF could be more transparent about their operating expenses, their management processes, and their tangible support (or lack thereof) for diocesan mission and ministry. Such talks about improved cooperation between the diocese and TotF are getting underway, but it is rather surprising to many that such conversations are needed at all.

Taken altogether, one could think by analogy of what one character tells another in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*—"Something is rotten in the state of Denmark"—without our being able to know exactly what is rotten here or why it is so, much less how exactly we are supposed to proceed from here to a better situation.

As I have been keenly observing these events unfold, I have been keeping our vestry apprised about them and their implications for our parish. Aquia's treasurer, Chris Arey, began to learn some details about these matters when he attended an open house held by the Trustees of the Funds some ten months ago, and our delegates to November's diocesan convention—Curt Bradford, Jean Golas, and Mary Nixon—were already aware about many of these matters through their ministry on the vestry. I have had the privilege of working directly with all of these diocesan leaders across the years, and I know about the positive impact that that they can have.

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I also realize that what I have been sharing can seem like drinking water out of a fire hydrant.

At least for now, however, we at Aquia do not have anything to fear or about which to worry on these issues. None of these diocesan developments has any immediate impact upon our parish. While we have a bit of transition for ourselves ahead of us—as some vestry members rotate off and are replaced by new vestry members to be elected at our parish’s annual meeting on Sunday, January 6, at 10 a.m. in the great hall (or one Sunday later in case of snow or ice on the day appointed)—our core leadership in this parish remains solid. And Aquia Church is certainly held in high esteem around the diocese.

What will happen eventually with new diocesan leadership remains to be seen. Your leaders at Aquia are staying tuned to what happens with the Trustees of the Funds, just as we are keeping a watchful eye on the selection of any new

bishops who might guide us (including the appointment of a new assistant bishop, with terms to be determined, as authorized by the recent diocesan convention). Whenever a bishop arrives at Aquia for confirmation, reception, and the reaffirmation of baptismal vows (which is not currently scheduled to happen until sometime in the year 2020), we will welcome that bishop with respect and gladness. Based on past performance and investment strategy, we believe that TotF is a prudent place for keeping most of our investments, at least for now—even if we know we have other options available to us. And Bishop Goff has announced that the diocese will hold some listening sessions in the time ahead, where folks can share their perspectives and voice their concerns.

A few other facts are obvious, especially this: these diocesan developments demand our prayers. We need for the diocese to operate successfully in God’s mission and ministry, for these key positions of diocesan leadership to

be filled by faithful followers of Jesus Christ, for the diocesan staff to be free to support and assist us (instead of being distracted by news, rumors, and needless worry), for us to be able to have confidence in our leaders at all levels, and for whatever happens with the diocese to have a favorable impact upon us at Aquia, so that our parish is not hindered by these matters.

In order for any and all of that to occur, we need to be praying for our current leaders, our future leaders, the various processes of governance and ministry in our diocese, and for the health of our diocese as a whole. I have already offered many of these leaders my personal encouragement and my professional support, along with the prayers of our parish and my own prayers as well. Your clergy will continue to keep the vestry and the parish apprised of further news, and your clergy always welcome your comments and concerns about such matters.

*Jay Morris*

## *Special Worship Schedule*

- Dec. 23** 7:30 a.m.: Holy Eucharist  
10:00 a.m.: Holy Eucharist with Children’s Christmas Pageant in the great hall  
5:00 p.m.: NO Holy Eucharist
- Dec. 24** 5:30 p.m., 8:00 p.m., and 11:00 p.m.: Holy Eucharist for Christmas Eve, with Christmas music offered 30 minutes before each service
- Dec. 25** 10:00 a.m.: Holy Eucharist for Christmas Day
- Dec. 30** 7:30 a.m.: Holy Eucharist  
10:00 a.m.: Christmas Lessons and Carols with Holy Communion  
5:00 p.m.: Holy Eucharist
- Jan. 6** 7:30 a.m.: NO Holy Eucharist  
10:00 a.m.: Holy Eucharist with Parish’s Annual Meeting and Election of New Vestry Members in the great hall, with children’s Sunday School immediately after the Eucharist  
5:00 p.m.: Holy Eucharist

**In case of snow/ice on Jan. 6, the above schedule for that day will be observed on the following Sunday, Jan. 13.**



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## VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

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**Oct. 16, 2018**

**Dinner and Fellowship (starting at 6:30 p.m.) (hosts: Boes and Shoens).**

In attendance were Rector Fr. Jay Morris and Assistant Rector Fr. James Rickenkaker, along with vestry members Joe Howard (Sr. Warden), Bob Brandon (Jr. Warden), Mary Nixon, Jackie Chichesster, Jean Golas, Dickie Boes, Curt Bradford, Gary Perkins, John Sonderman (Asst. Register), and Douglas McGinty (Register). Treasurer Chris Arey also was present. Fr. Jay delivered the opening prayer and the Lord's Prayer.

**Business Session**

*Treasurer's Report* by Chris Arey.

Pledge income is down \$14 K from last year. \$12.6 K was cleared from Fall Fest. Chris Arey also briefly discussed some issues with the Trustees of the Funds organization.

*Minutes from Previous Meeting* by Register Douglas McGinty. The minutes were unanimously approved as amended.

**R-2018-15:** Delegates to Diocesan Annual Convention (approved 9/18). Parochial Report (approved 9/18).

**New Business**

R-2018-16: Retaining Funds for Aquia's Pantry (administration). Approved unanimously.

**Reports from Vestry Committees**

*Administration Committee* by Jean Golas. Cleaning services needed to do more, including possibly waxing the floor. Mary Nixon discussed the long-term commitment of waxing. Mary further noted that Aquia's Table needs more volunteers. There were 107 guests last week (10/10/2018) and 125 the previous week (10/3/2018).

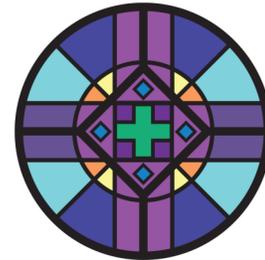
*Finance Committee* by Fr. Jay. The annual pledge drive commenced with the sermon last Sunday (10/14/2018). By the end of the week, the pledge letter will be mailed with the signatures of

all the vestry members. *[The letter has been mailed.]* A vestry member should give a short speech every Sunday at all three services for two or three weeks in support of the church and the pledge drive. *[Jr. Warden Bob Brandon spoke on Oct. 28; Sr. Warden Joe Howard, Mary Nixon and John Sondermann spoke on Nov. 4; and Curt Bradford and Kathy Trevarthen spoke on Nov. 11].* Pledge Card Sunday is Nov. 18, 2018. Charlie Bingay is working on the tentative budget draft, which will be submitted by the group. The Treasurer Chris Arey recommended an assets valuation. Chris also noted that the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) should have a separate EIN (Employer Identification Number) with the IRS. Fr. Jay agreed because the BSA is not governed by the Church.

*Building and Grounds Committee* by Jr. Warden Bob Brandon. Many compliments were extended to the ECW for their work on Bishop Shannon's retirement reception on Oct. 11. Only two walkway lights are working around the CFFB, and Bill Hoffman is pursuing warranty coverage. Water is leaking into the basement of the CFFB (in the Christian education director's office), and the water needs to be diverted. The cracked glass needs to be replaced in a door in the great hall. *[The glass has been replaced.]* Kudos were extended to Chris Wanner, who finished digging the footers and replacing concrete structures for the cemetery fence. Also discussed were the inspection needed to recover the \$57K bond and the disposition of the firewood in the back parking lot. *[Stafford County has recently conducted this inspection.]*

**Report from the Senior Warden**

Senior Warden Joe Howard thanked all the contributors for the Homecoming, Fall Fest, Bishop Shannon reception, and Rosalia Pribble funeral reception.



*Vestry Highlights*

All were excellent. Joe further thanked the adult choir for the Choral Evensong.

**Report from Rector**

Fr. Jay delivered the Clergy Report. The 224th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Virginia will occur on Nov. 2 and 3, 2018. *[Curt Bradford, Jean Golas, and Mary Nixon represented Aquia Episcopal Church at the Convention.]* Fr. Jay also praised the ECW for all their great contributions that reflected well for the church and community. New vestry members need to be recruited because the terms for Joe Howard, Bob Brandon, Gary Perkins, and Curt Bradford will expire in January. There was further discussion about some issues at the Trustees of the Funds; Fr. Jay recommended obtaining more facts and options before deciding what to do.

**Upcoming Dates**

*[10/20: Virginia Diocesan Homes summit at Aquia (9:30 a.m. -1:30 p.m.)]*

*[11/2-23: 224th Annual Convention of Diocese of Virginia]*

11/20: Vestry meeting (hosts: Perkins and Sondermann)

12/18 Vestry meeting (hosts: Brandon and Howard for Wardens' chili cook-off)

**Good of the Order, Closing Prayer by Fr. James, and Adjournment**

*Respectfully submitted,  
Douglas McGinty, Register  
Aquia Episcopal Church*





Billie Jane says, "Thank You from all the animals at the Stafford SPCA!"

## Thank You!

We wanted to thank you for including us in the Blessing of the Animals' donation. We truly appreciate your support!

Respectfully,

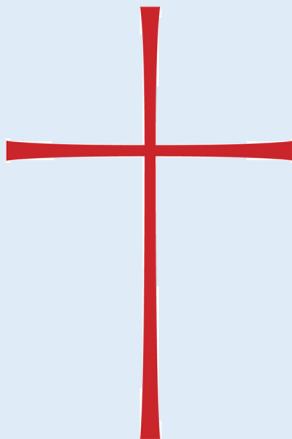
Tracy Downey

Adoption and Intake Coordinator / Humane Education Facilitator

Stafford SPCA

[www.staffordspca.org](http://www.staffordspca.org)

[Editors' Note: *Each year at the Blessing of the Animals service, a collection is received and the proceeds donated to the Stafford SPCA. For 2018, \$30 was collected.*]



We, as Aquia Church,  
joyfully respond to the grace, love and fellowship  
of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit  
at work in our midst  
by celebrating His presence,  
sharing His abundance,  
and proclaiming His word throughout the world.



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## FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

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### FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

**Funerals:** *"Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord; and let the light perpetual shine upon them."*

Helen Jean Burgess Adkins, 1934-2018; Ralph Adkins, 1926-1991.

### NEWCOMERS/VISITORS

*"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."* Hebrews

13:2. Tyler Dean, Alida Griffen, Michael & Andrea Bailey



### SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS AT AQUIA CHURCH

**New Babies:** Thanksgiving for the birth of a child will be offered as part of the service on the second Sunday of the month (youth Sunday). This will be scheduled as needed. Please call the church office the week prior, if your family would like to be included.

Also, please call the church office after a birth so that a red rose can be placed on the altar in thanksgiving.

**Those being deployed:** Please call the church office so that we can offer special prayers at a service prior to your departure. Also we want to put you on our prayer list for all those in the service of our country who are deployed.

### FUTURE BAPTISMS

The next scheduled date for a baptism is Jan. 13, 2019. If you would like to have a baptism on this date, or if this date doesn't work for you and you would like to request another date, please contact the church office so that counseling with the clergy can be scheduled.

### PRAYERS FOR EXPECTANT PARENTS

Ian and Anna Burns

[www.aquiachurch.org](http://www.aquiachurch.org)

[office@aquiachurch.org](mailto:office@aquiachurch.org)

(540) 659-4007

### Aquia Church Prayer List – December 2018—January 2019

Faye Andrews, Rhett Blythe and Family, Alex Bradley, Debbie Byers, Judy Chaplin, Laura Chichester, Elijah Colliver, Jeff Davis, Becky Dixon, Jodi Evans, Robert & JoAnn Feldman, Peggy Hall, Chris Hundley, Kooker Family, Suzanne Lanterman, Lori, Ken Luehrs, Adelle McCrary, Kenny Miller, Pat Moncure, Vanessa Moncure, Patty Montgomery, Rebecca Poole, John Pribble, Marian Richardson, Michele, Scott Smith, Donny Stanford, O.D. Taylor, John & Pam Tompkins, Kenneth Tompkins, Tom Tremper, Patrick Weber, Catherine Willis.



## Greening the Sanctuary

The Flower Guild requests donations of magnolia evergreen and holly (with red berries) branches and volunteers to place poinsettias in the windows before Christmas Eve. We will be happy to pick up greenery, if necessary!

We will "green" the sanctuary on Friday, Dec. 21 or Saturday, Dec. 22 at 10 a.m.

Also needed, a volunteer to water the poinsettias and remove dead leaves or plants, a couple of times between Christmas Day (Dec. 25) and the Epiphany (Jan. 6).



## 2018 Christmas Flower Order Form

Enclosed is my donation for Christmas and Epiphany altar flowers, wreaths, and garland. I understand that I am giving my donation toward the overall preparation of the church for Christmas.

I would like my gift to the Christmas Altar to be:

In Thanksgiving for:

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In Memory of

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I would like to take a poinsettia home after Dec. 25: (Circle One) YES NO

Otherwise, I understand that the poinsettias will be taken to shut-ins or other people in pastoral need during the Christmas season.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please enclose a check for \$20 made out to Aquia Episcopal Church and indicate on the memo line: "Christmas Flowers." DEADLINE IS DEC. 10.





**AQUIA**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Aquia Episcopal Church  
Post Office Box 275  
Stafford, VA  
22555

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



## Advent Festival of Lessons & Carols

December 9

5 p.m.

## Choral Evensong

January 13

5 p.m.

December 2018 **READING ROOM** by Jay Morris

From time to time, Father Rickenbaker and I read a book together—he reads his copy, I read my copy, then we discuss it together—so that we can learn not only from the author but also from each other. The book we have recently begun reading, and the book that I am commending to you here, is *Advent: The Once and Future Coming of Jesus Christ* by Fleming Rutledge (Eerdmans, 2018). A native of Virginia, Rutledge is a lifelong Episcopalian, being noted for a prominent ministry of preaching and teaching at Grace Episcopal Church in New York City and subsequently for her vocation as a widely traveled guest speaker and author of some eight books. Her most recent book, dealing with this liturgical season upon which we are about to embark, has won critical acclaim from a variety of scholars and an array of leaders in our denomination and elsewhere.

This book is a set of sermons, talks, and other writings (some even beginning as commentary in church bulletins and newsletters) from across her career. Uniting them is the obvious theme that part of the focus in Advent is on preparing to commemorate the birth of Jesus (where Advent can help us prepare to honor the life-changing event of his Incarnation in the past), while a bigger part of our focus should be—but rarely is—on preparing our lives to expect his eventual return as he comes to judge us all (where Advent can help us prepare for that life-changing future event). Accordingly, Rutledge spends much of her effort here describing the situation in which all of us Christians now find ourselves: between the times of Jesus' first coming to earth two thousand years ago and his eventual second coming, whenever that might occur. We find ourselves in the tension between the joy of Christmas and the potential terror of facing Jesus as our Judge. So the attention that Rutledge pays to the elements of hope and promise that permeate the Scripture readings and hymns of Advent helps us better understand her perspective that the coming judgment we must experience one day is not guaranteed to be the same thing as a necessary condemnation of us as individuals nor of us collectively as the human race.

Among her essays in this book are a five-part explanatory series about Advent that was first published in *The Christian Century* magazine and two multi-part lectures about suffering, expectation, and hope that she gave at Grace Church in New York. The bulk of his book comprises sermons from across several decades that read as freshly even now as the contemporary events and real-life situations mentioned there. Most (though not quite all) of those sermons were preached up and down the east coast. They have been grouped thematically about matters prior to Advent (such as the coming of the kingdom of God, evil and suffering, and our need for justice), such great pre-Advent feasts as the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels (see Revelation 12) and the sometimes-called Feast of Christ the King), and then for each of the Sundays of Advent. Which is to say: the serial arrangement of these sermons reflects a natural progression of themes, rather than the chronological order of their delivery. This pattern helps to guide the reader along the narrative flow of the Advent season. The concluding section suggests a worship service of lessons and carols for Advent that is anchored in the O Antiphons (which are expressed in the great Advent hymn "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" calling O Wisdom, O Lord, O Key of David, O Morning Star, etc., with accompanying readings from Scripture and hymns aptly paired with those passages) and that will not be unlike our own Advent Festival of Lessons and Carols on Sunday, December 9, at 5:00 p.m.

Because your clergy have not yet finished reading and discussing this volume, I cannot report yet on every detail in it. But the more one reads along its way, the more one sees through Rutledge's writing the biblical basis for our Advent beliefs and practices and hopes, and the more one sees Advent as an opportunity for spiritual refreshment even amidst the difficult introspection and the self-denying turn toward God that Advent demands from us. I generally don't quote blurbs from other authors about the book or books I am reviewing in this column. But I will supply here one blurb by Wesley Hill (who teaches New Testament at Trinity School for Ministry and whose work I admire) because it is accurate without being fawning:

Many of us in the American church are addicted to preaching that makes us, the hearers, into the heroes. We listen to sermons to receive advice—about how *we* can do better or *we* can try harder or *we* can be stronger in this or that aspect of Christian life. For all of us suffering this theological addiction, Rutledge's *Advent: The Once and Future Coming of Jesus Christ* is the rehab program we need. God is the saving agent here, and God's coming in Jesus Christ to dismiss our efforts at self-justification is the recurring theme. Reading this book liberates us to enjoy a new theological sobriety.

Indeed. For further preview of Rutledge's book on Advent, you can see and hear her for yourself in several short videos that are available at the following Website:

<https://eerdword.com/2018/09/04/eerdmans-author-interviews-fleming-rutledge/>