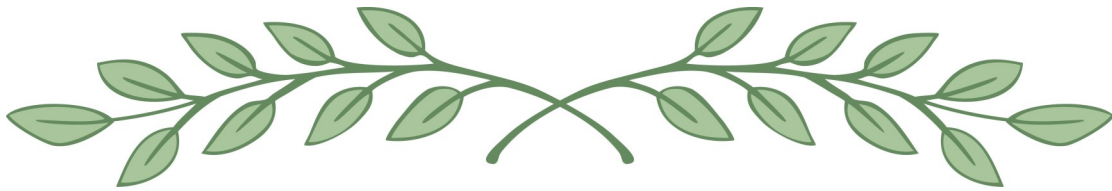




AQUIA
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Cross Section

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

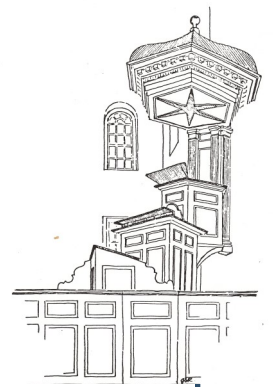


FAITH



CAN MOVE MOUNTAINS.

MATTHEW 17:20





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

Cuthbert Mandell, R.I.P.

The Reverend Cuthbert H. Mandell, rector of Aquia Church from 2001 to 2011, died on Aug. 21, 2019, at his home in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, after several months of illness. I was privileged to serve at his request as the preacher for his burial and to help officiate there on Aug. 24.

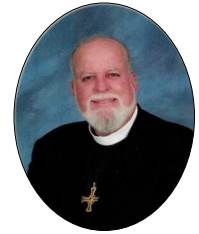
Cuthbert's tenure at Aquia is remembered (among other things) for expanded ministry for fellowship and outreach, spiritual growth and growth in active membership, and stability in the parish. Our Aquia's Table ministry was developed and launched through his leadership, and so was some early work toward the Christian Formation and Fellowship Building and the initial capital campaign for its design and construction. He also brought to Aquia Church the altar hangings and clergy stoles for youth Sunday, with their famous handprints of children in our parish; indeed, he was wearing such a stole at his burial. He arrived at Aquia after some periods of unpleasantness and uncertainty in our parish life together, and his general approach to ministry helped to refocus our attention on what truly matters for Christian faith and life and to offer some calm following past storms here—not to mention the subsequent challenges of life in this diocese and in The Episcopal Church as a whole.

For me, Cuthbert was an outstanding mentor and friend who always had time for listening closely and for offering wise guidance when needed. That was especially true as I arrived at Aquia straight out of seminary and as I faced difficulties in my personal life. He always helped me to see the best in other people, even in cases of disagreement or personal conflict. In addition, Cuthbert was concerned to keep us well-grounded in the bedrock principles of our faith as a reliable source of strength in this increasingly confused and confusing world, rather than tending toward the trends of the times. Even in retirement, as we continued to stay in close touch, I was amazed at how often he continued to explore potential solutions for perennial and complex challenges in the Church—such

as evangelism, stewardship, and youth ministry—while he conducted his reading, research, and reflection in these areas.

A native of Louisiana and graduate of LSU (for both college and law school), Cuthbert worked as an attorney (including public service as general counsel for the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources and as an administrative law judge) before entering seminary. He graduated from Virginia Theological Seminary in 1994 and was ordained a priest in 1995. He served parishes in the Dioceses of West Virginia and Massachusetts before serving at Aquia; in retirement, he served as a supply priest in the Dioceses of Easton and Southern Virginia. Upon retiring, Cuthbert and Jane moved to the eastern shore of Maryland, partly in order to be closer to their son and his family; around two years ago, Cuthbert and Jane returned to Massachusetts so that they could live near their two daughters and their families. Cuthbert and Jane were thrilled to be able to spend so much time in recent years with their grandchildren for daily life, vacations, and special occasions. He was an outdoorsman from an early age, and his interests ranged widely from sports and current events to travel and literature—all enjoyed with a warm sense of humor.

Cuthbert is survived by his wife of 44 years, Jane Mandell (3520 Summit Dr., Bridgewater, MA 02324); three children, five grandchildren, and other relatives. Memorial donations may be sent to Episcopal Relief and Development, 815 Second Ave., New York, NY 10017. He surely will be missed.



The Reverend Cuthbert H. Mandell
Rector Aquia Church, 2001-2011

Jay Morris



FROM THE ASSISTANT RECTOR

New Sunday School Curriculum

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 are committed to the good work of teaching our youth the importance of Scripture for our daily life as Christians. As we have heard recently in our Morning Call series on ministry with the younger generations, having a biblical worldview today is terribly hard because of the mounting pressure from secular society to dilute Christianity. But this goal of a biblical worldview is no chimera. It is indeed possible! It begins with parents owning the historic Christian faith and continues with them teaching their children that very same faith that was “once and for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). We desire to supplement that good work you do at home with what we offer in Sunday school.

My desire as a priest and Christian educator is to have youth who have been steeped in the faith and in God’s Word in Scripture. Those two things are necessary for a living relationship with our living Lord Jesus Christ. It is for that reason that this Sunday school year, the middle/high school class will begin a new curriculum from SparkHouse Publishers called **Colaborate Bible Study** (intentionally misspelled to emphasize the word **lab**).

In this new curriculum, we will go through a survey of the Old and New Testaments with the youth. The lessons will do such things as show how the Bible came to be in the form we have it, touch on the major themes of the Bible, and show how the history of salvation is woven throughout the text from the garden of Eden to the resurrection of the dead in the Revelation of St. John. Instead of it being a

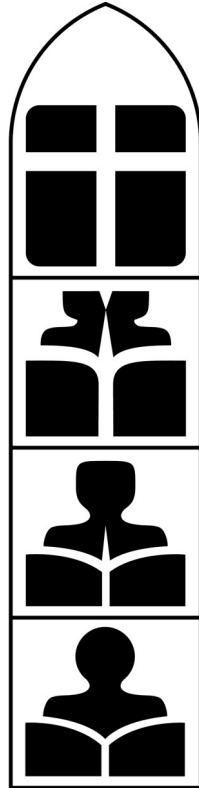
lecture style, the curriculum uses videos and other media to engage the kids in the study of Scripture. This means that each lesson will involve some thought and introspection that is intended to encourage spiritual growth. As for the format, each lesson involves a problem statement, a key verse of Scripture to focus on, and a takeaway to leave with.

The very first lesson is called “Canon” (the church term that we use for the collection of books we call the Bible). The problem statement is: “I don’t know why the Bible is so special, why certain parts made the cut, and who had the right to decide.” The key verse of Scripture on which we will home in is 2 Timothy 3:16: “All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.” The takeaway after the lesson is completed is: “The canon was developed through inspired and faithful discernment to accompany Christians in faith and life.” The lesson is tailored around the problem. The key verse helps to frame the Christian response. The takeaway is the perspective we want the kids to leave with. I truly believe that this will be a fruitful program for our youth.

After this program is completed, at the end of this Sunday school year, we are looking into going into the next program level offered by SparkHouse. Stay tuned for more information as the year proceeds. We look forward to partnering with you, both parents of youth and other fellow Christians, in this important endeavor.

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*



**Learn
&
Grow**



AQUIA CHURCH VESTRY

Chris Arey

Dickie Boes

Finance Committee Chairperson

Jackie Chichester

Jean Golas

*Administration
Committee Chairperson*

Bill Hoffman

Senior Warden

Ron Korth

*Junior Warden
Building & Grounds
Committee Chairperson*

Doug McGinty

Register

Larry Moxley

Mary Nixon

Kit Stoltz

Youth Representative

Chris Wanner

FALL FEST AUCTION—October 5 at 11 a.m.

How our list has grown! Can you help?

A huge “thank you” goes to all the parishioners and merchants who have contributed so generously to the Auction to date! Below is a list of gifts that have been added since the last newsletter article was written (July 15 through August 15). As you can see, we have received some fabulous donations! If you would like a copy of the complete list, check out the poster on the church gate each Sunday or contact Mary Jane Cole (maryjane@cfsw.biz).

New donations from Fellow Parishioners and Friends of the Parish:

Mouth-watering Pies: a pie a month for 4 months baked by Pat Moncure, retired pastry chef of

The Happy Clam

Redskins Football Tickets: two tickets to a Redskins game offered by Marion Wall (details to follow)

Virginia Cavalier Football Tickets: four tickets to the University of Virginia game in Charlottesville offered by Marion Wall (details to follow)

A Bear in a Chair: a cuddly Teddy Bear in a child’s Windsor rocking chair of cherry wood

1970’s Bohemian Wicker Peacock Chair: Sit in grand style! A gift from Jean and Don Bittner

Kaleidoscope Quilt: 80 X 60 in., lovingly handcrafted by Marion Stein and given by her family (as pictured on following page)

A Basket of Baskets: Large “Day Basket Factory” basket filled with Longaberger baskets, Charleston Sweetgrass baskets, and more (as pictured on following page)

Donations from Merchants, Businesses and Restaurants:

Sight & Sound Theatres in Lancaster, Pa.: two adult tickets for seeing *Queen Esther* (March 14 - Dec. 31, 2020)

Maruca “Cottage” Bag: from Ulman’s Jewelry (valued at \$90)

Jingle Nog European glass ornament lighthouse "Sailor's Delight" from Crown Jewelers (valued at \$50)

Stafford House of Yoga: one month of unlimited Yoga (valued at \$120)

Picker’s Supply: \$80 gift certificate for group guitar lessons

Paragon Village 12: four bowling games and four movie passes

Kimmerman’s Co: a personalized tumbler

Ingleside Vineyards: a tasting for two

Family Pizzeria: coupon for 18” pizza, soda plus t-shirt

Wawa: gift basket

Edible Arrangements: \$29 gift card

Meadows Farms: \$20 gift card

Corky’s: \$30 in gift cards

Pets Plus: \$50 gift card

Many of these items will be grouped together into single bidding items.

(Continued on next page ...)



(... continued from previous page)

Do you have something to offer: perhaps an antique or a better White Elephant item, sporting event tickets, or a time-share vacation week? Could you give a few music lessons, cooking lessons, or hours of leaf raking? Just let Becky Monger, Brenda Monger, Shields Jones, or Mary Jane Cole know what you can contribute. It is not too late to help make this our best Fall Fest yet! Tell your friends and neighbors about our great list! Follow us on Facebook: "Fall Fest at Aquia Church." "Like" us and "Share"!

Mary Jane Cole



Kaleidoscope Quilt



Basket of Baskets



Fall Fest Donations

We will begin accepting donations for the Flea Market, Treasures, clothing and the Book Nook on Sept. 10. We will have a Pod located near the Parish Hall. The Pod is large enough for boxes, lamps, household items. Please mark your boxes with type of contents.

Furniture: we will accept furniture or may be able to arrange for pickup after Sept. 23. Storage is limited. Our Parish Hall is occupied weekly and long term storage is not currently available.

Please contact Briget Kane at bkwings_n_things@yahoo.com to arrange for pickup.



EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

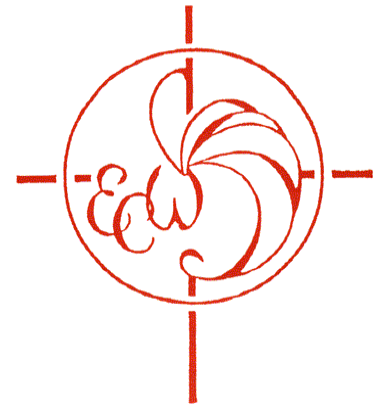
I have a grove of river birch trees outside the window where I work at home. Each year about this time, the leaves turn from green to yellow and finally drop, covering our patio like a crispy blanket. They have not failed this year; it is a signal fall is on its way. The hummingbirds are storing up for their September migration south, and I await their return in early June next year.

I could be saddened by these annual events. I do however find joy in this process each year. It continues to remind me of God's divine plan. Nature seems to understand, even when I find myself sometimes needing a reminder. We have many reminders here at Aquia, from services on Sundays to begin our week, to daily activities with our rector, assistant rector, parish family, and ministry groups being a part of the work in his name.

One annual event to remind us is the Homecoming Sunday or gathering, which brings together families and friends of our parish for joyous communion, good food, and fellowship. We hope you have marked your calendar; bring your appetite and joy in celebration of renewal always happening at Aquia. The ECW will host Homecoming immediately following the 10 a.m. service: **Annual Homecoming Luncheon/Dinner on Sept. 8** in the great hall.

We hope all newcomers will join us and share many of the traditional dishes, and we are always excited to share your special dish. Our sign-up sheet for all those who want to share a traditional dish or lend a helping hand in set-up and breakdown will be at the picnic table on your way into the church. Come share the good food, laughter, and fellowship of this day of Homecoming at Aquia!

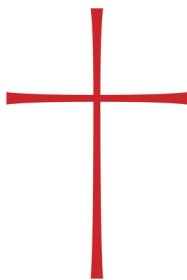
You hear about it, you wonder what you can do, but most importantly you don't want to miss our 63rd annual Fall Fest. On Oct. 5, the doors will open at 8 a.m., and you can fill your day shopping for goodies from the country store, treasures, handmade crafts, or bargains in the flea market. The book nook always has a surprise or two, and the clothing closet is not to be missed. You are sure to find great pieces of jewelry to add to your collection, too. The planning started months ago. The ladies of the ECW bring new ideas and keep the popular departments filled. Our flower mart, located between the parish house and the great hall, delivers pumpkins, plants, and *objets d'art* for your gardens. To pique your interest, you will certainly see many announcements throughout September until Oct. 5. Our posts on Facebook continue to reach out to the community and others.



Breakfast and lunch will be available in the great hall, and our specialty—pulled pork—will be available to enjoy in sandwiches, in one-pound takeout servings, or in the form of a full pork butt! A great place to take a break before our renowned auction is in the great hall. The kitchen opens at 7:30 a.m. Presales for our popular hand-rubbed whole pork butts will be available. We hope you will take advantage by placing your order early.

Did I mention it will be on the calendar for Oct. 5? I am excited to fill in more details!

Briget Kane
ECW President



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.



OUTREACH

The outreach committee did not have any official meetings this summer; however, we were still busy. We finished the “Cash for Cows and Change for Chickens” campaign in June and collected \$774.98. Soon we will be selecting the animals we will be purchasing.

School supplies were collected earlier this year than in past years because of the early starting date for classes in Stafford County. Enough supplies were given to supply a classroom of children with the basics. The Department of Social Services was grateful for the contributions received.

The shoe collection for the Jenkins Donelson foundation was very successful. They were overwhelmed by the number of pairs of shoes collected. A thank-you letter from the foundation was published in the weekly bulletin

and also appears below in this edition of the newsletter.

On July 13 we helped at the Stuff-the-Truck event at Shoppers Food Warehouse on Garrisonville Road. It was reported that a total of 1,336 pounds of groceries and \$266.79 in cash donations were collected for the benefit of Stafford’s local food pantry.

We participated in National Night Out on Aug. 6, and spread the word about the wonderful things happening at Aquia Episcopal Church. We handed out packs of M&Ms, packages of oatmeal, miniature Tootsie Pops, glow sticks, and trifold brochures featuring information about our church. We met a lot of new friends and we are grateful to everyone who helped us with this event.

The after-school program at Stafford Junction will begin on Sept. 9. We

again will be delivering meals the first Thursday of the month. This means we will start packing meals on Oct. 1 for delivery on Oct. 3. With the redistricting, some of their students were moved to other schools. They no longer service Ferry Farm Elementary, Hampton Oaks Elementary, or Hartwood Elementary, but have added Conway Elementary and Anne Moncure Elementary. They will not have a total head count until school starts, but the numbers should remain between 15-20 students per school. We will use the gift cards collected from the Lenten Cross to purchase food for the meals.

Our next meeting will be on Sept. 3 at 6:30 p.m. in the great hall. Please join us and help us plan our events for the rest of the year. All are welcome!

Johanna Jones

Dear Mrs. Jones [Johanna Jones] and Aquia Church Members,

Thank you so much for volunteering to collect shoes for the Jenkins Donelson Foundation (JDF). We were truly amazed by the overwhelming response from the Aquia Episcopal Church Family. A decent pair of shoes is a valuable commodity for the homeless, and underserved population. The primary reason people suffer with foot pain is due to improper foot wear. Children attending school with shoes that are too small or too big find it hard to focus on school work. Men and women who wear the wrong type of shoes suffer with foot, leg or back pain throughout the day as they try to earn a living.

Aquia Episcopal Church is very active and respected throughout Virginia community. Your generosity to others is a blessing to all. We appreciate all the time and effort each of you took to help us fulfill our mission to provide shoes to those in need. The shoes the Aquia Episcopal Church family donated are a blessing and they will make a big difference in the lives of dozens and dozens of families! Thank you, and may God continue to bless each of your ministries.

*Respectfully Yours,
Carolyn Jenkins*

[NOTE: The Aquia Church outreach committee sponsored a shoe collection drive this summer, as indicated by the above acknowledgement from the Jenkins Donelson Foundation.]



Worship, Service and Fellowship

The summer months have gone by quickly for the ladies of Sts. Mary and Martha Guild, but we have accomplished a good bit. Our inventory for the Fall Fest craft room has grown with clothespin soldiers and angel ornaments, sitting Santas, tall Santas, and more. During the month of September, we will meet every Thursday morning to finish our crafts and plan what our shop will look like on Oct. 5. We are always seeking new members and new ideas, so please join us as we plan.

We have a few requests of our parish family:

1) We still need gently-used costume jewelry for our very popular costume jewelry room at Fall Fest. You can leave your gifts on the picnic table or in the foyer of the great hall.

2) We would appreciate a few samples of any craft that you make to add more variety to the room's inventory.

3) If you can help at Fall Fest in the craft room or the jewelry room, please let us know or sign up on the volunteer poster found on the picnic table in front



Our clothespin soldiers are ready to greet you at the Fall Fest!

of the church every Sunday this month. We plan to work in 2-hour shifts.

All ladies of the parish are invited to join us. Come and enjoy, and learn what Sts. Mary and Martha Guild is doing to love and serve Our Lord and to support our parish family. Our meetings begin with Morning Prayer at 9:30 a.m.

in the parish hall downstairs and end at noon. For more information, contact Mary Jane Cole (maryjane@cfsw.biz) or Denise Thornton (neisieb@aol.com).

Mary Jane Cole



Dear Aquia Church, Father James and Father Jay,

Thank you all very much for the encouraging words, prayers and recovery well-wishes!

To date my surgery has gone very well. I am recovering without pain; this is a great relief as I was suffering greatly before the surgery.

The cause was sudden and unexpected severe arthritis that developed in my broken bones from my injury.

I am progressing well with physical therapy and extremely thankful for the improvements.

For those of us who have received these prayer letters, the meaningfulness of the signatures and the prayers are greatly appreciated.

*Sincerely,
Rebecca (a.k.a. Becky) Patton-Dixon*



VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

July 16, 2019

Dinner and Fellowship. Started at 6:30 p.m.; hosted by Dickie Boes and Christopher (Kit) Stoltz. In attendance were Rector Fr. Jay Morris, Asst. Rector James Rickenbaker, Sr. Warden Bill Hoffman, Jr. Warden Ron Korth, Treasurer Chris Arey, Youth Representative Christopher (Kit) Stoltz, Dickie Boes, Jackie Chichester, and Register Douglas McGinty. A quorum was present. Fr. Jay opened with a prayer and the Lord's Prayer. *[Subsequent events are bracketed and italicized.]*

Business Session. Started at 7 p.m.

Treasurer's Report by Chris Arey. June was a good month for income and expenses. February had a high water bill, but the monthly bill has gone down since then.

Minutes from Previous Meeting delivered by Register Douglas McGinty. Vestry approved unanimously.

- R-2019-07 Employee Health Insurance Adjustments (approved 5/21).
- R-2019-08 Sale of Burial Rights to Cindy Gibson Baldo (approved 5/20 by electronic vote).

New Business

- R-2019-09 Adoption of ACS Financials and Realm Connect (submitted by Chris Arey and endorsed by finance committee). Vestry approved unanimously.
- Vestry Co-Chair for 2019 Fall Fest. Bill Hoffman volunteered to serve as Co-Chair.
- Capital Campaign Committee and Possible Matching-Challenge Opportunity. Chris Arey, Dickie Boes, and Bill Hoffman volunteered to be on the steering committee for the upcoming capital campaign. Other parishioners were suggested as possible members for the steering

committee. Fr. Jay recommended that the Vestry endorse up to \$104K to reduce the principal on the new building's construction loan through a matching grant program with a target date of October 31, 2019. *[The matching grant program has been announced during services and through church bulletins.]* The annual pledge drive might start in October 2019. The capital campaign might begin the first week in 2020.

Reports from Vestry Committees

- *Administration*, by Fr. Jay. The committee met last week. A checklist has not been completed for janitorial work. People liked holding the annual parish picnic on the campus.
- *Finance*, by Dickie Boes. Line item 6832 for rectory maintenance is noted, and it is recommended that unspent funds be carried over from year to year.
- *Building and Grounds*, by Ron Korth. He already e-mailed a list of committee goals. Funds have been donated for a new directional sign on campus. The subfloor in the Fleuries needs to be replaced. The storage area in the attic of the parish hall needs to be addressed.

Reports from the Senior and Junior Wardens

- *Sr. Warden.* Bill Hoffman indicated that interest needs to be sown for Vestry membership.
- *Jr. Warden.* Ron Korth already delivered the Building and Grounds report.

Report by Rector Fr. Jay

The Diocesan Executive Board agreed to continue its relationship with (and investment in) the Trustees of The Funds (TOTF) for at least two more



Vestry Highlights

years. The CEO of the TOTF, Mike Kerr, has retired. The new interim CEO is doing well. Fr. Jay will begin a new Morning Call series on youth ministry.

Upcoming Dates and Information

- *[7/28 Newcomer luncheon (immediately after 10 a.m. worship service)]*
- *[8/6 National Night Out at Stafford Marketplace (5-8 p.m.)]*
- Meal hosts for Aug. 20: Chichester and Moxley
- Meal hosts for Sept. 17: Golas and Nixon
- Meal hosts for Oct. 15: Arey and Moxley
- Meal hosts for Nov. 19: Boes and Korth
- Meal hosts for Dec. 17: Hoffman and Korth (wardens' chili cookoff)

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

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



FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

Baptisms: “... sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ’s own forever”

Robert Stevens.

NEWCOMERS/VISITORS

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares” (Hebrews 13:2).

Josh Mobley, Steven Brewster.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS AT AQUIA CHURCH

New Babies: Thanksgiving for the birth of a child can be offered as part of the service on each youth Sunday (typically the second Sunday of the month) and will be scheduled as needed. If your family would like to be included, then please call the church office during the week prior. 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 would like to put you on our prayer list for all those who are deployed in the service of our country.

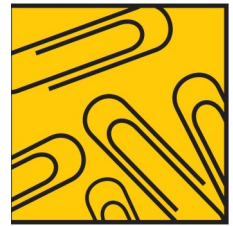
FUTURE BAPTISMS

The next scheduled date for a baptism is Nov. 3, 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

Derek and Emily (Selz) Wisser; Brett and Sarah (Selz) Moran, Zac and Samantha (Hedger) Chesley.

Sue Selz



CHURCH OFFICE



www.aquiachurch.org

office@aquiachurch.org

(540) 659-4007



Aquia Church Prayer List – September 2019

Faye Andrews, Rhett Blythe and family, Karen Burrell, Edward Chaplin, Judy Chaplin, Elijah Colliver, Jeff Davis, Donnie Davis, Paula Davis, Robert & JoAnn Feldman, Larry Hartzler, Chris Hundley, Molly Lewis-Suttles, Lori, Ken Luehrs, Pat Moncure, Patty Montgomery, Rebecca Poole, Kenny Reilly, Janice Shelton, Scott Smith, O.D. Taylor, John & Pam Tompkins, Kenneth Tompkins, Tom Tremper, Patrick Weber, Walt & Elizabeth Yager.





SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School begins Sept. 8

Aquia Evening Lions Art Auction in the Great Hall

Saturday evening, Sept. 21, the Aquia Evening Lions Club is hosting an art auction. All proceeds will go to children in need throughout Stafford County.

Doors open at 7 p.m. for the preview of the art gallery, and the live auction begins at 8 p.m. You are invited and all are welcome.

Admission is \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door, but parishioners of Aquia Church are being offered the \$10 rate in advance or at the door; just mention your church membership! Admission includes hors d'oeuvres, desserts, and coffee, and a cash bar will be available.

For further information or for tickets, contact Janet Holt janet@holtforhomes.com)



Prayer for the Care of Children

Almighty God, heavenly Father, you have blessed us with the joy and care of children: Give us calm strength and patient wisdom as we bring them up, that we may teach them to love whatever is just and true and good, following the example of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer,
Page 829





AQUIA
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Aquia Episcopal Church
Post Office Box 275
Stafford, VA
22555

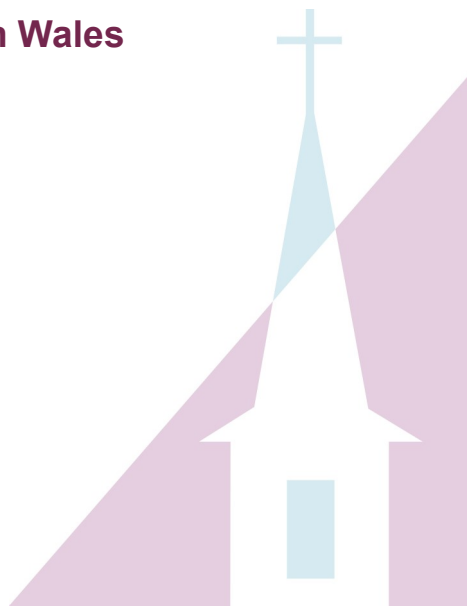
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Church-Spotting in Wales

On **Sunday, Sept. 22**, after the 10 a.m. service, Chris Arey will give a brief presentation on churches encountered during his walking tour in southeast Wales. Modest refreshments will be served. E-mail him at chris.arey@gmail.com if you might be interested in attending.

Chris Arey



One theme receiving a good deal of attention in biblical studies these days is the question of continuity and discontinuity between the Old Testament and the New Testament: was Jesus in his life, ministry, death, and resurrection doing something fundamentally and profoundly new and divergent from the Old Testament background, or was he doing something unsurprising and fully in accordance with it? Depending on the specific issue or the particular angle from which the theme is raised, one might find more continuity or more discontinuity. Broadly speaking, the last several decades have witnessed an explosion of effort to link Jesus and Paul (among other figures) as closely as possible to their Jewish roots and heritage, and to some extent no one could deny that. After all, Jesus and Paul quite obviously were born into Jewish families, were raised Jewish, their first audiences (though certainly not their only audiences) were Jewish, and their teaching is thoroughly laced with Jewish terms, concepts, and concerns. For instance, recall how Jesus began his ministry by declaring that he had come not to abolish the Jewish Law but to fulfill it and how Paul insisted upon his Jewish credentials. Yet there is also an awareness that some of the approaches taken by Jesus and Paul did not always uphold Jewish conventions and norms—consider how Jesus performed miracles on the Sabbath, how he did not always adhere to Jewish customs about meals and social interaction, and how Paul has long been regarded as ‘the apostle to the Gentiles’—and with that awareness comes an assumption that Jesus and Paul saw themselves as doing something decidedly different from what Jews of their day might have hoped or expected. Two books I have been reading this summer work in roughly opposite directions to help us appreciate the occasional tension between these two tendencies, and I think you would find them as interesting and engaging as I have.

Pointing in the direction of some historical and theological continuity between the Old Testament and the New Testament is a brand-new anthology co-edited by Craig A. Evans and David Mishkin, *A Handbook on the Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith* (Hendrickson, 2019). A well-known scholar of New Testament and Christian origins at Houston Baptist University, Evans wrote three crucial sections in this volume; Mishkin wrote two sections and teaches at the Israel College of the Bible in Netanya, Israel (where several other authors in this volume likewise teach). This book was written in part in order to fill a gap: faculty at the Israel College of the Bible planned to teach an online course about the Jewish background for Christianity and needed a textbook to introduce and explain details about that relationship, and eventually this book was borne. Most of the book comprises short sections (each around five pages long) on a single topic, which in turn are clustered together under broad categories, ranging from the biblical covenants for the salvation of Israel, biblical affirmations about the salvation of Gentiles, and biblical prophecies about the Messiah, to Jewish holidays and rituals for worship, Jewish elements in Jesus’ biography and teachings, the Jewish contexts of Jesus’ ministry and of his disciples, and Jewish themes and concepts in the New Testament documents. Also included are sections on how Judaism and Christianity parted ways into effectively different religions over time and on what life is like for ethnic Jews and Arabs in present-day Israel who believe in Jesus—a matter made more interesting in certain respects because a number of the book’s sections were written by people of Jewish background who count themselves as believers in Jesus. This book is the most comprehensive volume I have seen on the subject, and each section is short enough that it can be read easily in a single sitting while leaving the reader hungry for more (and turning the page for it).

Pointing in the direction of some theological discontinuity between the Old Testament and the New Testament is a year-old book by Donald A. Hagner, *How New Is the New Testament? First-Century Judaism and the Emergence of Christianity* (Baker Academic, 2018). Hagner is a highly respected, widely published evangelical New Testament scholar who taught at Wheaton College in Illinois and at Fuller Theological Seminary in California. After an introductory chapter on the large theme of continuity and discontinuity between the Old and New Testaments, Hagner addresses the manner in which the issue is raised in each of the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the letters of Paul, the Book of Hebrews, the general letters and the letters of John, and the Revelation to John. Where Hagner’s approach might be most helpful, it seems to me, is in his review of the Pauline epistles, which collectively are often treated by contemporary scholars (especially those associated with the ‘new perspective on Paul,’ led by E. P. Sanders and James Dunn) as just one version of Judaism, but they might not always appreciate adequately the fresh approaches that Paul took in his missionary activity and in his correspondence because of the fresh approaches that Jesus himself had originally employed. The book—conveniently brief at 179 pages of text—concludes with a chapter about what is new in the particular ways that Hagner frames the issue.

There’s an uncanny irony about this pair of books that I had not noticed until finishing this column: as a sign of respect for each other’s work in general and of these volumes in particular, Evans and Hagner have written quite complimentary endorsements of these complementary books. So this seems to be a rather reliable pair for reading.