



AQUIA
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

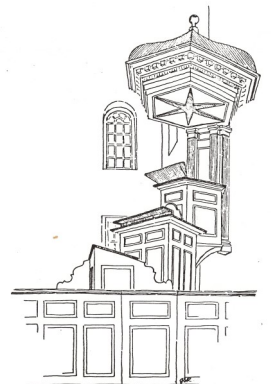
Cross Section

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

*Yea, though I walk through the
valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
for thou art with me.*



Psalm 23:4





CROSS SECTION

Aquia Episcopal Church

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

Contact us:

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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

Assistant Treasurer

Charlie Bingay

Music Director

Trystan Bennett

Dir. Christian Education

Kristen Morgan

Parish Administrator

Dennise LaBarre

Executive Assistant

Sue Selz

Nursery Supervisor

Dawna Spaulding

FROM THE RECTOR

What Else? What Next?

First our public worship services in person disappeared, even for Holy Week, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. No choir, no acolytes, no lay Eucharistic ministers. Same with in-person gatherings for Sunday school, the youth group, Bible studies, Lenten series, the Saints Mary & Martha guild, the men's breakfast, Aquia's Table, Aquia's Pantry, and all other ministry groups. Then special events like the craft show and chili cookoff for outreach, the annual golf tournament for Aquia's Table, Heritage Sunday, and this summer's mission trip—not to mention normal operations for our staff members. Yet along with cancellations came other adjustments: various groups and events moved online (such as vestry meetings and Vacation Bible School), as did Sunday worship with Morning Prayer, plus Father James added broadcasts weekday Morning Prayer. Then more good news: Aquia's Pantry resumed service with curbside delivery, followed later by Aquia's Table. Outdoor worship services were permitted just as the summer heat began to soar, but there's no clear sign when we can return to public worship indoors. Neither will there be our seafood feast this August nor—gasp!—Fall Fest this October.

This partial list of changes has affected most everything at Aquia Church, with even more changes at work, school, home, and stores and restaurants everywhere. We've learned how to wear face masks apart from sports helmets or Halloween costumes or bank robbery, we've used new phrases like 'physical distancing' and 'six feet apart!' and we've absorbed the latest news and speculation about public health with something like our anticipation of Christmas but with less glee and more glum. So you might be wondering with me: What else? What next? What other adaptations will we have to make? What plans besides vacation will need to change?

Such cancellations, postponements, disruptions, and other adjustments can be as heartbreaking as they are frustrating. But then St. Paul rightly reminds us: "we

do not lose heart" (2 Cor. 4:1&16).

We have determination, resolve, and strength to endure

what we must and to accomplish what we should by God's grace. Past generations have survived epidemics and plagues, and so shall we. Past and current generations have known warfare and struggles, and so do we. Future generations will face fears and uncertainties, and so can we. As St. Paul also wrote: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).

Even when we cannot gather physically for the usual opportunities in the normal ways, we can still unite spiritually with our variety of online/virtual offerings for worship and faith-formation each week. Folks are still finding fresh possibilities with our outdoor worship services each Sunday at 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (weather permitting in each case) until we can reconvene indoors. If you can venture out safely, there are still occasions for serving our neighbors in need with Aquia's Table and Aquia's Pantry. You may be involved with a ministry where some independent work is still available—say, making desserts for Aquia's Table, crafting with our prayer shawl ministry, completing tasks for a vestry committee, or reading ahead for Bible study. You might have friends and relatives who still need your prayers or who still seek your aid. Your own needs for friendship and spiritual growth are still present; they did not dissipate when the pandemic began, and perhaps have even intensified.

The last time I received communion was Sunday, March 8—nearly five months ago now, by far the longest stretch in my adult life. For you, the time gap might be even greater. Likewise, I miss seeing face-to-face so many of you all, my dearly beloved in Christ. Certainly in these cases, absence makes the heart grow even fonder.

Jay Morris



FROM THE ASSISTANT RECTOR

The Bible and Theology in Color

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 how you strive to see the image of God in every human being. This characteristic of our faith is vital to life together in the body of Christ and for our shared witness to the world. We all have different vantages from which we approach Scripture, but not all of them are beneficial to the body.

On my first trip to the Museum of the Bible, I was excited to see the exhibit on the Bible in America. But when I walked through it, I was struck by what I found there. There were several documents—books and letters, to be precise—written from both the pro-slavery and anti-slavery positions in America. Both positions sought to use Scripture for their support. The largest denomination represented by the documents on the pro-slavery side was The Episcopal Church. Our fellow Anglicans in the Church of England, William Wilberforce and John Newton among them, had worked to eradicate the slave trade in England over half a century earlier. Much of The Episcopal Church, though—especially in the South—was entrenched in that unjust and sinful enterprise. Some of the effects of that dehumanizing institution are undeniably still present in American society today.

It is for that reason, among others, that I took a class at Nashotah House Theological Seminary at the end of July. That course was called “The Bible and Theology in Color.” We were tasked with reading

and understanding, as best we could, representative theologies from different Christian groups. We read theologies from African-American, Hispanic-American, and Asian-American Christians. As the professor told us at the outset of the class, the point is not to agree with everything that those authors wrote. The point is to hear their voices, to learn about their experiences, and to recognize that they too are not just made in the image of God, but are also made children of God in baptism.

The course was challenging. There were many things with which I found myself in total agreement. There were also other things with which I found myself in profound disagreement. And contrary to the common narrative of shaming in today’s society, much of what I disagreed with had nothing to do with my bias as a white man, but with a sincere theological and interpretive difference based on what the Scriptures have to say to every sinner irrespective of race. But I listened and I learned.

Racism is at its foundation sinful. Racism and racial prejudice will not inherit the kingdom of God. Only when we *all* fall on our knees and recognize that we are sinners in need of a Savior can we then recognize our neighbors and love them accordingly. The Gospel conveys this message clearly. We are called to love one another because of how God first showed his love for us, by taking on human flesh and dying for the sins of the world. Racism and racial prejudice fall squarely into that category. God loves us all equally regardless of the color of our skin and—perhaps controversially—even in spite of the content of our character. God does not condone every behavior. Scripture is certainly our standard on that point. But God indeed loves every person, no matter what. We all would do well to remember that.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

*In Christ+,
Fr. James*



... recognize that they too are not just made in the image of God,
but are also made children of God in baptism.



AQUA CHURCH VESTRY

Chris Arey

Finance Committee

Charlie Bingay

Finance Committee

Dickie Boes

*Finance Committee Chairperson
Building & Grounds Committee*

Chris Bowie

Administration Committee

Bob Brandon

Building & Grounds Committee

Carrol Frederick

Administration Committee

Michael Golasz

Building & Grounds Committee

Bill Hoffman

*Senior Warden
Acting Chairperson of
Administration Committee*

Ron Korth

*Junior Warden
Building & Grounds
Committee Chairperson*

Patty Montgomery

Building & Grounds Committee

Patricia Springer

Administration Committee

Christopher “Kit” Stoltz

*Youth Representative
Administration &
Finance Committees*

Chris Wanner

Buildings & Grounds Committee

VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

No Dinner and Fellowship

In attendance: Fr. Jay Morris, Rector; Bill Hoffman, Senior Warden; Ron Korth, Junior Warden; Chris Arey, Treasurer; Charlie Bingay; Dickie Boes; Chris Bowie; Bob Brandon; Carroll Frederick; Michael Golasz; Patty Montgomery; Patricia Springer; Kit Stoltz; Chris Wanner.

Opening Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Treasurer's Report

Chris Arey relayed the report. Not all losses were recouped due to the COVID-related stock market downturn. \$134,000.00 was the General Fund balance. The amount of 14 months' worth of mortgage payments was in the bank. Expenses were down slightly and CFFB expenses were down. Insurance for health/disability for staff was paid twice in May of 2020, as this expense is paid as billed. The balance sheet reported principal for the construction loan was a \$1.604M liability based on year-end 2019 values; the actual current liability is \$1.160M and will be updated for future balance sheets.

Minutes from Previous Meeting

The draft minutes were amended to accept the following wording: "Persons applying to erect a memorial plaque may also offer to replace an existing section of fence, with a new section of fence upon which to affix the plaque." The minutes were approved as amended. [After the meeting, the Vestry unanimously approved R-2020-07: Appointment of Audit Committee to Review 2019 Financials, by electronic vote on June 29, 2020.]

New Business

Regarding the contract with Robynn's Professional Cleaning, the administration committee requested to specify areas being cleaned with a schedule attached. This would help primarily

with clean-up after Aquia's Table meals on Wednesday nights: clean-up would sync with the meal. There is an edit on Section III of the contract: strike the word "agrees" and replace it with "agreed." The administration committee's request was unanimously passed.

Johnson Controls contract, Resolution 2020-5, was discussed. This resolution would update the alarm system for the historic church. The current contractor will no longer maintain the existing equipment after December 2020. The new system will provide 4G service, and the existing smoke detectors would be used. Discussion followed regarding funding of the \$2,488.72 installation fee and the \$2027.93 annual service contract fee. The new system can be financed at the direction of the Treasurer, with adjustments to line items, in order to secure proper funding. In the future, Johnson Controls would offer training for new system users. The resolution was unanimously passed.

Pioneer Roofing Systems, Resolution 2020-6, was regarding the copper wrapping of the historic church cupola. Pioneer Roofing Systems was offering the same quality of copper protection that already exists with the copper roof on the church. The Building and Grounds Committee was proposing this resolution in order to repair the south side of the cupola, which has sustained water damage to the eave, thus resulting in roof leakage. It was further discussed that perhaps Pioneer Roofing Systems would also paint the fascia and any exposed wood. Discussion ensued regarding the possible change of appearance due to the fascia work, and how that might change the appearance of the cupola. It was decided that an application for a certificate of appropriateness should be pursued from the Stafford County Architectural Review Board if necessary. Ron Korth suggested that any existing white wood trim could be



Vestry Highlights

replaced by white aluminum trim, maintaining the current look of the cupola. The resolution was unanimously passed.

An assessment of the parish during social unrest in race relations was discussed. The clergy did not want to make merely a political response, as they are not elected officials. Anything regarding racism should be directed to the foot of the Cross and through our Lord Jesus Christ. The clergy will not provide political leadership, as that is not what they are trained or called to do. The Vestry responded in support of the clergy and their method of dealing with the current social unrest. Some discussion was directed around some of the Confederate symbols that were erected on our property previously by another generation. The plaque mounted at the exit driveway of the church displays a Confederate flag. While removal may be desirable, Aquia Episcopal Church might not have the legal authority to take it down. Confederate flags and such could be banned from the church grounds and cemetery.

It was also announced that the Bishop Suffragan of Virginia gave permission for us to conduct outdoor worship in

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CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

It wasn't what we originally planned, and we definitely missed being together in person, but Aquia Church had a successful (and its very first) virtual VBS the week of July 13-17. Thirty-five children from both our church and the community registered for this summer's program. Volunteers helped create and package 35 craft bags that families could pick up during the week prior. Families logged onto a special Aquia VBS website for daily Bible stories and music. Thank you to everyone who helped make this first online VBS a success.

Kristen Morgan



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response to the state's move into Phase III of reopening due to COVID-19. COVID-19 guidelines would be followed with no more than 50 people in attendance at one time, and socially distanced by 6 feet. No Eucharist would be distributed. This would be a supplement to the ongoing virtual worship that the clergy currently offer.

Reports from Jr. Warden, Sr. Warden and Committees

Reports were sent out electronically.

Upcoming Dates and Information

July 21, 2020: Vestry Meeting at 7 p.m., most likely conducted via Zoom.

Fr. Morris closed with prayer at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol F. Korth

Register, Aquia Episcopal Church

Aquia Church Prayer List – August 2020

Faye Andrews, Linda Beville, Rhett Blythe and Family, Julie Burgess, Debbie Byers, Jackie Chichester, Elijah Colliver, Richard Craven, Donnie Davis, Paula Davis & Family, Becky Dixon, Brian Driscoll, Robert & JoAnn Feldman, Robert Garrett, Christopher, Shawna & Oliver Gray, Larry Hartzler, Chris Hundley, John Jackson, Lori, Ken Luehrs, Pat Moncure, Patty Montgomery, Rebecca Poole, Linda Raisovich-Parsons, Kenny Reilly, Arnie Schwartz, David Smith, Scott Smith, O.D. Taylor, John & Pam Tompkins, Gayle Tompkins, Kenneth Tompkins, Tom Tremper, Patrick Weber, Walt & Elizabeth Yager.



EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

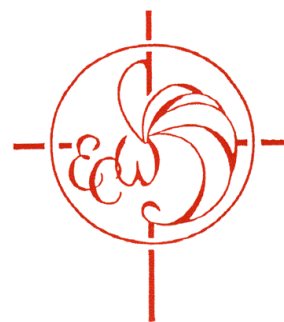
In August 2019, my attention was focused on guidance and what impacts our lives. I can say that August 2020 is fast approaching, and as I write this news, I am even more focused on guidance, direction, and what is impacting our daily lives. In planning my daily life and planning our ECW annual calendar, so many catchphrases come to mind: best practices, accountability, responsibility, tradition, and proceed with caution. There are times when I want to throw caution to the wind, not use every 'best practice,' and simply follow the ECW 2020 calendar of events whether traditional or spontaneous. On the other hand, spontaneity isn't necessarily a responsible avenue.

If we take some lessons learned from the past, with the help of ECW members, our 2020 calendar may be altered in a way that could bring our parish together in celebration of an alternative Homecoming on Sept. 13.

This year we hope to try a very different approach from our traditional meal and time of fellowship and joy following a morning service. Being unable to gather together in person this year, the ECW is working to create a 'traditional Homecoming' curbside take-out/take-home meal immediately following the morning service on Sept. 13. We will follow all the safety protocols that will be in place that day. We will keep our parish family informed through Sunday announcements and with the help of Father Morris's and Father Rickenbaker's daily and weekly announcements.

As we pray, gather, and share during this time in our parish, I still pray for guidance in the work that the Lord has before us in our church, our community, and our world. We put our hope and faith in the Lord, and we ask that He would hear our prayers.

Share our joy in service and participate, donate, or volunteer. You may



contact me at bkwnings_n_things@yahoo.com, or contact the church office for my phone number.

Homecoming Sunday on Sept. 13 is on the calendar with take-out/take-home meals!

Mission Statement:

The Episcopal Church Women of Aquia Church, with the grace of the Holy Spirit, wish to know Christ and make him known through prayer, education, concern for others, and joyful service.

Briget Kane

STS. MARY AND MARTHA

Worship, Service and Fellowship

During the month of August, Sts. Mary and Martha Guild would normally be very busy finishing up crafts, pricing them, and getting ready for Fall Fest. However, we all were forced quickly to become experts on a novel virus called COVID-19. Enter a change in plans!



A spiritual gift is **given** to each of us so **we** can **help** each other.

How thankful to God we are for the wise decision that our clergy and Fall Fest leaders have made. They cancelled Fall Fest 2020, but we already have plans for next year. Therefore, please save your jewelry and crafts (for those who have kept sane by making them during the "shut-down") for Fall Fest 2021! Aquia Church will not go down in history as hosting the super-spreader event of the community!

On Wednesdays, some of our members have joined other parishioners in sorting and packing food for Aquia's Pantry. The boxes of food, along with the delicious meals prepared by Aquia's Table, are distributed by curbside pickup outside the great hall on Wednesday evenings. If anyone feels a call to serve God and the community in

this way, come join us. These good works fit well with Sts. Mary and Martha Guild's motto of "Worship, Service, and Fellowship." We adhere to general safety procedures to keep everyone safe. If you have any questions, please contact Mary Jane Cole at maryjane@cfsw.biz or Carolyn Hendrickson at cvhendrickson35@gmail.com.

We will continue to worship together virtually at 9:30 on Thursday mornings. Anyone who would like to join us, please do. Let us know, and we'll put you on the e-mail list. Please let us know of your intercessions. Our fellowship in person will have to wait. Our regathering will be that much more important.

Carolyn Hendrickson



Re-Reading King's Letter from Birmingham Jail

Recent events in our country, including various protests and other matters of social unrest, have prompted me to read again the “Letter from Birmingham Jail” that Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote after he was arrested in 1963 for his leadership of peaceful protests amidst racial strife. While King was imprisoned, a group of eight white members of the clergy—a rabbi plus seven Christian leaders, including the anti-integrationist Episcopal bishop of Alabama and his bishop coadjutor—had published an open letter acknowledging briefly that cases of racial injustice deserved to be addressed but arguing against certain responses that King and others were making. He replied to their letter with a much longer, more forceful, deeply theological, and rhetorically shrewd statement that served not only as a defense of his position, but also as one form of faithful Christian witness. You can read the original “Call for Unity” and King’s letter for yourself on the Internet (both texts are widely available, as is King’s own audio recording of one version of his letter), and your doing so might be instructive.

King begins his letter by describing his Christian ministry on behalf of black folk. He aligns that work with the ministry of itinerant Old Testament prophets and the widely traveling apostle Paul in the New Testament. Then King famously writes that “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” followed immediately by a less famous but likewise important observation: “We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly.”

He proceeds to explain the four key steps of a nonviolent campaign: assessing evidence of injustice, negotiating with the powers-that-be about documented injustice, self-purification before taking any further action if negotiations fail to achieve resolution, and finally (if needed) direct action in such peaceful forms as sit-ins and marches.



UNITED IN FAITH

King also explains patiently his legitimate grievances and his attempts at reconciliation in ways that are profoundly reminiscent of the Declaration of Independence, where American patriots specified their concerns against abuses of imperial power of a different sort. Furthermore, he draws important distinctions between laws that are moral (such that they should be obeyed) and laws that are immoral (and thus do not deserve our obedience), with relevant examples given. Perhaps King’s most fascinating passages here concern not only his response to allegations of his being extremist, but also his criticism of black nationalists and especially of white moderates—criticism that might merit further consideration in today’s context.

King refers easily to philosophers like Socrates and Martin Buber, theologians from Augustine and Thomas Aquinas to Martin Luther and Reinhold Niebuhr, legal principles such as “justice too long delayed is justice denied,” various current events, and American leaders like Abraham Lincoln and even Thomas Jefferson (!)—doing

so all from memory, without access to a library, research assistants, or Google. He helpfully uses illustrations from Scripture, including the courage of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the Book of Daniel and of the early Christian martyrs, plus the capital punishment that Jesus unfairly suffered. King worries poignantly about the consequences of disappointing a young black daughter by saying that she is prohibited from enjoying an amusement park because of the color of her skin, while one can “see the depressing clouds of inferiority begin to form in her little mental sky, and see her begin to distort her little personality by unconsciously developing a bitterness toward white people.”

Given its circumstances, King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail” admittedly lacks some of the inspirational flourishes and oratorical power of his “I Have a Dream” speech. Yet it also offers careful reasoning from a decidedly biblical basis for his approach to racial injustice and social unrest. In our era, when statues are being torn down violently and removed deliberately, one might note in fairness that King himself was not perfect (and might even have admitted as much); information about his academic plagiarism and his marital infidelities has surfaced after his death, and such facts may be considered in our overall estimation about him. Even so, our sober reflection upon his letter in his time may well be helpful to us at our moment in history.

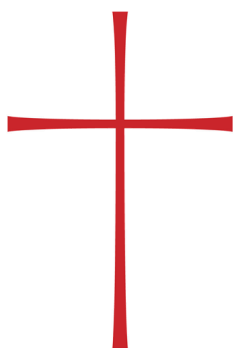
Jay Morris





Aquia Episcopal Church
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22555

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**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.**

August 2020 **READING ROOM** by Jay Morris

You already know that our parish has a remarkable number of folks with an array of skills, accomplishments, and talents. You often see the fruits of their labors displayed through our various ministries and discussed as friends here engage in conversation. What you might not realize, however, is the breadth of ability for writing books that we have in our midst. Several interesting people with ties to our parish have become authors over the years, and in this issue we celebrate the contributions they have made through writing in quite different genres—personal narrative, religious fantasy, and history—with all of these works available for purchase through Amazon.com and other bookstores.

Our fellow parishioner who has published a book most recently, to my knowledge, is Curt Bradford, whose *Off the Beaten Path: My Search for Sasquatch and Self* (Page Publishing, 2020) appeared recently. While Curt was raised in our area, he spent a number of years in the Pacific Northwest, where amidst work in the insurance business he was able to conduct research about ‘Bigfoot,’ ‘Sasquatch,’ and other such creatures and to investigate reports of their existence. This comes some years after growing up (as I did with “The Six Million Dollar Man” on TV) hearing about sasquatches and having some fears about what they might do to us. Curt’s travel for work and for exploration in this matter takes him around various parts of the forested parts of Washington state and Oregon, where the legends about these mysterious beings abound. So he narrates not only about his adventures in traveling, including the natural scenery of this region, but also about some of the friendships forged along the way and about how some of his perspective on life has grown or otherwise changed over time. That is to say: this book features some elements of personal discoveries made along the journey—elements that most any adult can readily appreciate. A quick read at just over 100 pages, *Off the Beaten Path* is Curt’s first published work, and perhaps there will be more to come.

Another local author whose work might interest you is the Reverend David G. Thabet. His book *Nueden* (Luxon Press, 2008), published just over a decade ago, is an imaginative work that examines biblical accounts of good and evil through the lens of literary fiction rather than direct theological essay or biblical exposition; Father Thabet’s helpful introduction provides some rationale for his particular choice of this genre. Two young adults from New England, Jenny Dalton and Franklin Harding, begin to discover a realm previously unknown to them, where they learn that the residents face the risk of experiencing sin for the very first time and may become subject to all sorts of harm. While they have been granted special powers that could prove very helpful, they also encounter temptations to use those abilities for ill rather than for good. Along the way they meet beings called the *angeloi*, whose assistance to the young couple proves invaluable for their journey and for their return. And given the competing forces that they also find operating in Nueden, they will need all that assistance and indeed much more. What this perilous situation requires ultimately is someone who can deliver the people from their troubles and indeed to rescue them from themselves. Father Thabet’s writing explores the complexity of trying to live, make decisions, and complete one’s path through the world in which Jenny and Franklin now find themselves, and it even provides some perspective on the history and romance between this couple in the hope that eventually love should prevail over hate. Does this sound like a different angle on the familiar story about our first parents in the garden of Eden from the opening chapters of Genesis, or (just as aptly) a different angle on the familiar story of our own lives in transition from innocence to sinfulness to new possibilities? Then you’re catching on to the themes of this page-turner, with a bit over 250 pages of text. Father Thabet and his wife Lois have been married for a number of decades now (you’ll need to ask them for the precise number of years!), having retired from his full-time ministry of some forty years in the Episcopal dioceses of Virginia and West Virginia.

On the far side away from Mr. Bradford’s west coast and on the far side away from Father Thabet’s imaginative world, *They Called Stafford Home: The Development of Stafford County, Virginia, from 1600 until 1865* (Heritage Books, 1997) is a detailed piece of historical research by Jerrilynn Eby (now Jerrilynn Eby MacGregor), who was raised in Aquia Church, worked as an educational librarian before retirement, and has published several other informative volumes about the prominent people and places of Stafford’s long history. She is active in the Stafford County Historical Society and has been publicly recognized for her commitment to researching, recording, and reporting with breadth and depth much of that rich background and legacy. Her books cover such topics as early Stafford’s iron forge industry, the many public officials who have served this county, and other elements of life in our region. In this book, readers will find the most comprehensive compendium of the families, homes, public buildings, geographic areas, and fascinating events from Stafford’s pre-colonial period to the end of the Civil War. An abundance of maps, photographs, and charts help readers in identifying the various locations described (especially in case you want to venture out and visit some of these sites on your own) and in keeping track of the information presented. Here you will also discover why our church’s office building, the Fleurries (as indicated on its historical marker—or should it be the Fleurry’s?), has that very name.