



AQUIA
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Cross Section

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



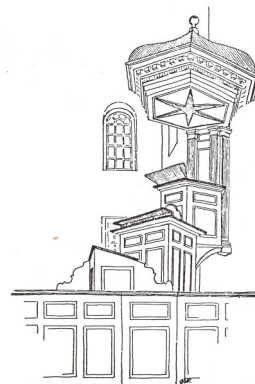
Sing

to the Lord,
bless his name;
tell of his salvation
from day to day.

Psalm 96:2

INSIDE . . .

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CROSS SECTION

Aquia Episcopal Church

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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

Thanks Be to God, Even Amid the Pandemic

Since the coronavirus pandemic first hit our area, we have witnessed countless changes in so many spheres of life, including work, school, travel, recreation, and shopping. Aquia Church was no exception to the fluctuations. Some weeks we could gather outdoors, whereas other weeks that less-than-ideal situation was prohibited by some authority or by the weather. Can you remember vaguely when “Zoom” was something you might do with a camera lens or a photocopier, rather than an electronic platform for living half of your life?

After the pandemic’s early days, we immediately started offering Sunday worship services online—and weekday worship too, soon enough—plus Bible studies and book discussion series. Our church office practically had to shut down its routines on campus, with staff members completing many tasks from home. Some ministry groups, such as the men’s breakfast group and the altar guild, had to cancel their plans month after month; clergy visits had to be eliminated in all but the most extreme situations. Aquia’s Pantry and Aquia’s Table shut down altogether, then gradually and creatively reopened with curbside delivery of bags and boxes of food and meals, with the number of people served increasing exponentially so as to approach the statistics appearing on a McDonald’s sign (well, some 300 people served each week seemed like billions and billions served!). Other groups like the Saints Mary and Martha Guild and the prayer shawl folks continued their ministry in quiet and thoughtful but thoroughly changed ways. The youth group held a variety of meetings outdoors (sometimes with a campfire for s’mores, sometimes over pizza or snacks) and even more online (including Sunday school, electronic scavenger hunts, and homemade versions of entertaining games).

Now that Aquia Church is finally able to reopen the doors to our historic church building for indoor worship, there are lots of thanks to spread around. For starters, the lay members of our church staff have worked wonders to complete their usual

operations amid such altered circumstances, including working often from home over the Internet and sharing performances of organ music and hymns virtually. Vestry members have undertaken plenty of campus improvements indoors and outdoors, and these good folks have led the way in setting up for our outdoor services Sunday after Sunday.

While many churches have struggled to pay their bills during the pandemic, and while we at Aquia have indeed lost several important revenue streams (like renting space to two other churches and for special events), your financial contributions have remained as steady as the careful management of our finances; we have been spared so much adversity because of your generosity. Many parishioners have taken the initiative to stay in contact with the church and with each other through telephone calls and through electronic communications—all of which remains a sign of your deep commitment to our ministry together, to the fellowship here, and to one another. Through our virtual broadcasts, we have become available to an array of new friends in various places who might visit in person now, and we have become available to former parishioners living elsewhere. We even helped people worship while sitting in their vehicles on our campus. Thank goodness for the combination of new technology and your patience!

With the worst of the pandemic starting to be put behind us, at long last we are returning to indoor worship. What is more: we have learned how to be resilient, adapting to new and entirely unfamiliar circumstances, while retaining the roots of our faith and even finding new ways for sharing that faith with more people. Thanks be to God.

Are you ready for what’s next?

Jay Morris



FROM THE ASSISTANT RECTOR

On Vacation? Go to Church

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 fact that you know the importance of taking time to rest. I have heard from a number of you recently about how you have taken time to vacation with family. That is wonderful! And I have been especially thankful to hear that the number of COVID cases in our congregation has remained low, relatively speaking. (As we all know, one case is too many.) But as the pandemic wanes and you take vacations, I want to encourage you to do something. Whether at home or on vacation, go to church. As always, I want you to come to church at Aquia. With the number of vaccinations at its current level, it is now indeed safe to return. Near the end of last month, we were even able to begin taking off our masks for outdoor worship. But if you are on vacation and your vacation spans a Sunday, I want to encourage and exhort you to take time on Sunday to be in church and to worship our God with brother and sister Christians.

Fr. Jay and I know the importance of rest. God himself hallowed a day of rest for his people. Rest is good. Worship and rest are not mutually exclusive. But the beach should not take precedence over worship. Church is profoundly important for the Christian. When we come to church, we hear the Word of God read and proclaimed. In hearing the Word, faith is created in the hearts of the hearers. And when the faithful baptized receive the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, we receive the body and blood of our Savior Christ and our faith and bond with him is strengthened. Worshipping together is essential to the Christian life. So even when you are on vacation, make church a priority. It is more important than whatever else you will be doing, I assure you.

So why am I writing this article? Because in spite of the gas shortage we experienced in May, a number of folks will be going on vacation in June. School is either

already out for the summer or will be shortly. Even Rachel, Eleanor, and I are on vacation for much of the first week of June. As restrictions ease with the pandemic, your clergy urge you to take care of yourselves and of your families to protect against the virus. But we also encourage taking some vacation time, whatever that might look like. No matter where you go, we implore you to go to church, in-person if at all possible. And when you do, let us know. We enjoy hearing about where you go to church when you vacation.

Finally, as is always good, it is important to remind you that our Lord Jesus Christ continues to reign over all the earth. The virus has not dethroned him. He is still our Lord and King. Do not lose hope when you watch the news, but rather be filled with hope that God is in control, knowing that he is sovereign. This pandemic is coming to an end. God is greater than COVID. No matter what, don't lose sight of that. Enjoy your time wherever you go. We look forward to seeing you at church when you come back home.

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

*In Christ+,
Fr. James*



AQUIA 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
Chairperson*

Michael Golasz

Building & Grounds Committee

Bill Hoffman

Senior Warden

Ron Korth

*Junior Warden
Building & Grounds
Committee Chairperson*

Patricia Springer

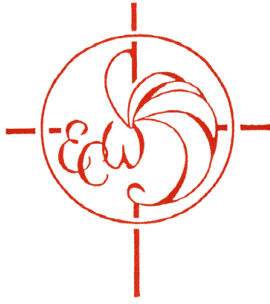
Administration Committee

Christopher "Kit" Stoltz

*Youth Representative
Administration &
Finance Committees*

Chris Wanner

Buildings & Grounds Committee



EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

Opportunities for service during the pandemic have been unpredictable at best. Through the newsletter and Sunday announcements, I will certainly try to share where the ECW is moving this summer and early fall.

As I write this article, I am happy to report the success of our recent Heritage Sunday on May 16. Heritage Sunday was a success in so many ways: our parish family gathered in a COVID-compliant manner; we celebrated with a traditional meal prepared by the ladies of Aquia Church (who warmly welcomed new hands to help); a number of us picnicked on the church grounds; and everyone shared fellowship through this meal with others whom we have rarely seen these last few months.

We quietly go about the ministry of the ECW to support Aquia Church, our parish family, community, diocese, and world. Also, we are ready to continue our work in support of non-profit organizations, such as Hope House and Camp SERVE, and the Moss Free Clinic.

Fall Fest was planned and held for 63 years until the interruption from the pandemic last year, but Fall Fest is back on the books for 2021! Fall Fest will be held on Saturday, Oct. 2 this year. This event is the ECW's main source of fund-raising. As we reopen, our plans are well underway. The blueprints on the draw-

ing board may be different in some ways than in previous years, and they are still open to changes, if needed. You are invited to participate and to begin collecting donations. Here are just a few of the opportunities available to you: time, treasures, flea market items, *objets d'art*, man-cave items, and so much more. If you have a question or want to volunteer, simply e-mail me (bkwings_nthings@yahoo.com).

As we begin to reopen and acclimate ourselves to changes, please consider attending the Annual Meeting of the ECW of the Diocese of Virginia, the date and location of which might be announced in the coming weeks. The meeting is usually held in the fall (often mid-October). I hope many from our parish will plan to attend. The day will include a meeting and guest speakers introducing and learning more about some of the many ministries receiving support from Aquia's ECW. It will be held at one of the churches in the diocese. We will celebrate the UTO Ingathering; lunch will be included, along with a joyful service held with our sisters in Christ in the early afternoon.

As we move forward, I am sharing a favorite of mine from the prayers of Episcopal Women (below).

Briget Kane
ECW President

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.*



STS. MARY AND MARTHA

Worship, Service and Fellowship

Forrest Gump once said, “Life is a box of chocolates.” Well, with COVID this is true: you never know what you are going to get. So, you crafters out there (and you know who you are), please get some crafting done for the Fall Fest craft room. That way, IF we have some version of Fall Fest 2021 (maybe Fall Fest 2.0?), we will have the fruits of your labor to start us on our way, OR we will save your gifts for next year.

Until we can assemble again safely, Sts. Mary and Martha Guild will continue with our Thursday Morning Prayer. Mary Jane Cole has accepted the task of keeping our intercessions current, and we are blessed to have her. If you have any updates or new prayer requests, please con-

tact Mary Jane (maryjane@cfsw.biz) or me (cvhendrickson35@gmail.com). For any inquiries about our guild, please contact either one of us.

Since the number of COVID-19 cases in Stafford determines whether we are able to meet inside for church, let’s pray for the residents of Stafford and all other places. We pray that we all get vaccinated (if we aren’t yet), and that we are both wise and determined enough still to practice all the COVID protocols. We also pray that these protocols can soon be lifted. Together, with God’s helping hand and presence, we can do this!

Carolyn Hendrickson



What Can You Contribute?

Fall Fest Auction Action – Mary Jane Cole

Surely the title of this article has piqued your interest. We have great hope that there will be a Fall Fest at Aquia Church on Oct. 2, 2021. Although it is still just a rumor, some planning needs to start now, such as building an auction!

This year’s Fall Fest Auction will, no doubt, look different from past years. Perhaps it will be a Silent Auction so we can avoid having folks sit in a crowded room. Perhaps we will have the Auction outside just as we did when we began having an auction twenty years ago. As in recent years past, all items up for bid will be shown on our Facebook page for “Fall Fest at Aquia Church” and will be described in the newsletter and bulletin as soon as we receive them.

The auction committee is now ready and waiting for your great ideas and contributions. This year we will need to rely almost entirely on the generosity and creativity of our fellow parishioners to build the auction. After such a tough year for local merchants, restaurants, and busi-

nesses, we cannot count on many of them to provide their usual gifts.

Do you have a talent to teach or a service to offer? Do you have an antique in your attic, a drum set in your basement, or an extra week of your time-share? Unused, unexpired gift cards are always welcome, as are moose heads, cigar humidors, and cedar chests. How about offering an evening of baby-sitting, or an afternoon of raking and bagging leaves? Could you build a themed gift basket with a friend or your ministry group? If so, please let me know.

What if you offer us a gift for Oct. 2, 2021, and we must cancel our plans for the day? Your gift will be returned to you or it can be saved for the next Fall Fest. Let’s plan and pray together for this year.

Any gifts, offers of help, or suggestions will be gratefully received. Please contact me for more information. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Mary Jane Cole
maryjane@cfsw.biz



2021 Mission Trip Delay



In most years, Aquia Church looks forward to sending a mission trip team of teens and adults somewhere into the world in order to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others through lending a helping hand with home repairs, through our devotions and Bible studies at those work sites, and through the hope we share with our neighbors there. There's always some recreation and free time involved, too. Aquia mission trip teams have journeyed as far away as Idaho and Puerto Rico; more typically, we travel closer to home (think: New York to West Virginia to North Carolina and other places in-between). Aquia Church has sent youth as early as rising ninth graders, and a variety of parents and non-parents have helped make our journeys real parish-wide mission trips. I have helped to lead three such mission trips from Aquia Church in the past, and Father Rickenbaker has participated in similar mission trips in own background.

When the coronavirus pandemic began in 2020, we decided not to undertake any such trip that year, out of caution for our own teens and adults and out of caution about the health of the neighbors whom we would meet in our travels. Father James and I have concluded, reluctantly, that even though public health statistics about the pandemic are starting to improve in many places, the opportunity for a mission trip team to travel safely and work safely this summer has not yet arrived. Unfortunately, we still believe it best that we not attempt to undertake a mission trip this summer, even while we are resolved to look ahead to summer 2022 for the prospect of re-starting our annual mission trips.

We mention this now—well in advance of June/July 2022—so that families of our teens can begin thinking ahead about including this opportunity in their plans for next summer. We generally encourage teens who are rising ninth graders and above to participate in a mission trip. We have often had some

parents of those teenagers participate as adult leaders (among them Linda Burghart, Christine Hammer, Mary Nixon, and Tim Spaulding), along with some adults in our church who are parents of former teens (Chris Arey is one such parent) and occasionally adult parishioners who have not had any son or daughter involved here. There is a 1:5 ratio of adults to teens required by our usual organizers (Group Mission Trips of Colorado), and it is always helpful to have at least one woman and at least one man leading our trips.

Costs for the fees (registration and materials) and the travel expenses (including rental vans and gas) are typically offset by a combination of youth group fundraising (remember the 2020 Valentines Dinner??? The funds raised at that event have been saved for our next mission trip!), funding from our parish's operating budget, vouchers from the Diocese of Virginia when teens complete confirmation here, and family contributions. Selecting the specific calendar week for going can get complicated when Stafford County Schools, Prince William County Schools, home-school families, and private schools in the area have different schedules, but we can help every prospective participant to be involved in the decision-making and to plan well in advance.

If you have any questions about what is involved in organizing and conducting a mission trip, if you have any ideas about what could make for a refreshing and successful fundraiser, or if you want to have more perspective on how your teen can prepare (or how as an adult you can participate as a leader!), simply let us know, and we'll be happy to help.

Jay Morris



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

We are planning for an in-person VBS June 21-25 (9a.m.–noon) with a “Rocky Railway” theme. We shall keep families apprised about any COVID-related restrictions, so that we can keep every VBS participant and family safe and informed. Online registration is now available for potty-trained preschoolers through children entering fifth grade on the church website (go to www.AquiaChurch.org, then click on the “Rocky Railway” VBS logo toward the bottom of the page), with a registration deadline of Friday, June 11. Adults and teenagers who would like to assist, or parents and grandparents wanting more information about our VBS ministry, should contact our director of Christian

education, Kristen Morgan (christianed@aquiachurch.org). This year VBS will be offered virtually/online only if necessary.

You can support our Vacation Bible School by bringing donations for our snack cart: we seek juice boxes (100% juice) and individually wrapped snacks (e.g.: Goldfish crackers, pretzels, animal crackers). Please do not bring snacks with nuts or nut butters. Donations can be dropped off on Sunday mornings or Wednesday afternoons at the Christian Formation and Fellowship Building and label them “VBS Snacks.”

Kristen Morgan



NEW BUILDING Matching Challenge

The vestry has authorized the start of a new matching challenge campaign to reduce the debt on our construction loan for the Christian Formation and Fellowship Building as follows: all contributions toward the new building received March 17 – Sept. 30, 2021, will be applied directly against the principal on the construction loan, and all those contributions will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to \$100,000.00, thanks to a grant being made anonymously. So, any contribution made by the end of September will help us pay down our debt and will be matched up to one hundred grand! Please mark “CFFB” on the memo line of your check or on the envelope of your contribution. Thus far we have raised approximately

\$60,000 toward this new challenge, but the deadline for this matching opportunity is approaching more swiftly than in years past (which usually had a deadline of New Year’s Eve—but not this year!). So please consider how your contribution of any size can help to move us closer toward our goal and reduce our debt more rapidly than expected.

Jay Morris



FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

Baptisms: Jonathan Cate (May 23, 2021).

Deaths: Betty Ann Wirman (1931-2021).

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS AT AQUIA CHURCH

New Babies: Thanksgiving for the birth of a child will be offered as the occasion arises. 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 in your family 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. 7, 2021. If you would like to have a baptism on this date, or if this date does not work for you and you would like to request another date, then please contact the church office so that counseling with the clergy can be scheduled.

Aquia Church Prayer List

June 2021

Rhett Blythe and Family, Julie Burgess, Debbie Byers, Donnie Davis, Paula Davis, Brian Driscoll, Kristin Driscoll, Robert & JoAnn Feldman, Christopher, Shawna & Oliver Gray, Chris Hundley, John Jackson, Lori, Ken Luehrs, Michael McKelvey, Pat Moncure, Rebecca Poole, Terry Pickett, Linda Raisovich-Parsons, Arnie Schwartz, Scott Smith, O.D. Taylor, John & Pam Tompkins, Gayle Tompkins, Kenneth Tompkins, Tom Tremper, Patrick Weber, Jaxson Wiser, Walt & Elizabeth Yager.

IN OUR
Thoughts and Prayers

How to reach us:



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office@aquiachurch.org

(540) 659-4007

<https://www.facebook.com/AquiaEpiscopalChurch>



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.



VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

April 20, 2021 (via Zoom)

In Attendance: Rector, the Rev. Jay Morris; Assistant Rector, the Rev. James Rickenbaker; Treasurer, Chris Arey; Senior Warden, Bill Hoffman; Junior Warden, Ron Korth; Charlie Bingay, Dickie Boes, Chris Bowie, Bob Brandon, Michael Golasz, Patricia Springer, Kit Stoltz, Chris Wanner

Business Session

Opening Prayer and Lord's Prayer:
The Rev. Jay Morris

Treasurer's Report:

\$190,352.24 in bank for CFFB mortgage payment
Cemetery Fund reflects tractor payment
Aquia's Table expenses reflects food support for the community
Treasurer's Report accepted unanimously

Minutes from Previous Meeting

March vestry meeting minutes approved

Old Business:

R-2021-08: Stipend for Seminarian
(approved 3/16)

R-2021-09: Adoption of Section 125 Cafeteria Plan (approved 3/16)

R-2021-10: Cemetery Mowing Contract (approved by electronic vote 4/18)

New Business:

R-2021-11: Sale of Burial Rights to Felicia Parlier (Rector and Senior Warden for the Cemetery Superintendent): Reconfiguration of existing family burial plots will add to expenses for Parlier family. Spaces 1-3 and 6-8 in lot 207 were requested. Vestry waived the cost of one space and required instead full payment for five spaces. In an amendment, the vestry approved expenditure of up to \$1,000.00 to assist with relocation of headstones and markers and other possible expenses for the Parlier family. Vestry approved this resolution as amended, with one nay recorded regarding the amendment.

R-2021-12: Good Friday Offering

(Finance Committee): Designated to the Diocese of Jerusalem with vestry approval of funds from the General Fund. Approved unanimously.

R-2021-13: Appointment of Audit Committee to Review 2020 Financials (Finance Committee): Approved unanimously.

R-2021-14: Additional Umbrella Liability Insurance Coverage

(Administration Committee): Premium pro-rated to reflect mid-year change in policy. Approved unanimously.

Continued Business:

Approval of Parochial Report: Regarding requested information about the vestry's response to working toward racial justice and equality, the vestry responded that it is a work in progress with a variety of responses possible.

CFFB Matching Challenge for 2021:

Starting point is day after March vestry meeting (March 17) and deadline will be last day of Sept., 2021, with contributions being used to pay down principal on loan, and the match being offered is \$100,000.00. \$54,000 recently received from an anonymous donor is already in hand and will be counted toward the match; donor requested that the money be put toward reduction of principal. The vestry requested that the Treasurer write a check for \$54,000 to be applied to the CFFB's loan principal. Approved unanimously.

Approval of Linda Burghart and Doug McGinty as non-Vestry members of the Finance Committee was unanimous by the vestry.

Committee Reports:

Building and Grounds: Girl Scout Paige Walzer using a small plot of land located near the CFFB to grow a garden and donate the produce to Aquia's Table.

Administration Committee: office job descriptions will be re-written; a new bulletin board will be erected near the CFFB and used to communicate Aquia



Vestry Highlights

Episcopal Church's current events and information. Contract oversight will be clarified and determined later.

Reports from Senior and Junior Wardens:

No further reports.

Rector's Report:

No further report.

Good of the Order, Closing Prayer and Adjournment: the Rev. James Rickenbaker

Chris Wanner sent kudos to the Cemetery Committee for faithful guardianship of the cemetery.

*Respectfully submitted,
Carol F. Korth
Register, Aquia Episcopal Church*





AQUIA
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Aquia Episcopal Church
Post Office Box 275
Stafford, VA
22555

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



BLESSED
are those...
whose hope
is in the **LORD** their God.

Psalm 146:5, NIV

June 2021 **READING ROOM** by Jay Morris

Our current Wednesday evening series on Good News about Jesus Christ as presented by Paul, Mark, John, Matthew, and Luke has caught some attention around our parish, in part because of the ways in which this series has highlighted some major differences among the four Gospels in the New Testament. For many of us, our main contact with the Gospels on a regular basis comes through hearing excerpts from them read during worship services; and while that is an important and natural way for us to encounter this Good News, doing so risks obscuring the literary and theological integrity of each evangelist's work. Have you ever noticed, for instance, that neither Mark's Gospel nor John's Gospel reports anything about the conception, birth, infancy, or adolescence of our Lord? Such information is confined to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, and even they do not share all the same details. For all the miracles that Jesus performs before his resurrection, only one of them—the feeding of the five thousand from five loaves of bread and two fishes—is reported in all four Gospels, and there is not one parable related in all four of them. The Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John differ quite a bit in their accounts of Jesus' whereabouts, statements, and activity from the first Easter Sunday morning forward; and what many scholars call the original ending of Mark (16:1-8) includes no appearance of the risen Lord whatsoever, with his post-resurrection appearance mentioned as almost an afterthought in the so-called 'longer' ending of Mark (16:9-20)—as though that part were a subsequent addition to Mark's Gospel. Furthermore, the Good News of Jesus Christ that Paul reports in his letters, especially in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, bears little resemblance in form to the life-stories of Jesus that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John convey. Even so, Paul mentions what he calls "my Gospel" several times in ways that might prompt the inquisitive reader to wonder about connections between the Gospel according to Paul and the more commonly called Gospels at the start of the New Testament. Our series has discussed a number of these matters already, with more ground yet to be covered. So a reliable guide for them can help anyone, regardless whether you are participating in this series each week or whether you prefer to engage in some independent reading.

To that end, among the books that I have found quite helpful is the *Fortress Introduction to the Gospels*, 2d ed. (Fortress, 2019) by Mark Allan Powell. His volume features six chapters: one on the processes involved in transmitting information and perspective on Jesus from his life into written form for us, one on each of the Gospels in the New Testament (with the chapter on Luke actually being a chapter on the combined text of Luke-Acts), and one on the most important non-canonical gospels (those writings dealing somehow with Jesus that were written in antiquity but are not as old as the four Gospels of the New Testament and that are not included in the universal canon or standard of the Bible for Christians). An introductory chapter explains some foundational material about the historical Jesus, the early collection of reports about his teachings and miracles, the first compilations of his biography, and subsequent developments with editing the Gospels, translating them, and understanding their impact. For each of the four Gospels in the New Testament, Powell presents the sort of who/what/when/where/why/how information that the interested reader would want to know: guidance about authorship, major characters and themes, probable dates of composition and editing, original setting, material unique to each, style, and so forth. He also draws comparisons between one Gospel and another, so that readers can recognize their differences and distinctives more clearly than before. Accordingly, Powell includes a large number of charts, diagrams, and tables that enrich the reader's understanding of his text. For instance, when some passage about Jesus appears in two different Gospels, Powell lays them out side-by-side so that the reader can easily see where the wording is basically identical between the two versions and where the wording differs. There is also a glossary of terms used in the book and a map of the Holy Land around the time of Jesus. Powell's second edition makes two substantial enhancements to the first edition with which I was already familiar: the previous chapter on Luke has been expanded considerably into a chapter on the Gospel of Luke together with the Acts of the Apostles (because Luke the evangelist wrote both books and apparently intended for them to be read together as one continuous narrative), and the previous appendix on so-called gospels that are not part of the New Testament has been developed into a full-fledged chapter. These purported gospels (such as the Protoevangelium of James, the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Peter, the Gospel of Mary, and the Gospel of Judas)—while not part of the authoritative Christian tradition—sometimes shed some light on thought-patterns and ideas floating in and around the early churches and make for interesting (if sometimes startling) reading. The totality of the main text (excluding endnotes, bibliography, etc.) is just under 250 pages.

I learned about Professor Powell first through his writing on the stewardship of money and possessions from a biblical perspective (*Giving to God: The Bible's Good News about Living a Generous Life* [Eerdmans, 2006]) and later through his writing on scholarship regarding the historical Jesus (*Jesus as a Figure in History: How Modern Historians View the Man from Galilee* [Westminster John Knox, 1998]). Both texts are helpful in their own right. More recently, as I was preparing for our current series, a former professor of mine called Powell's work on the Gospels to my attention, and I am glad that he did so. Powell taught New Testament at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Ohio for over three decades.