



**AQUIA**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Cross Section

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



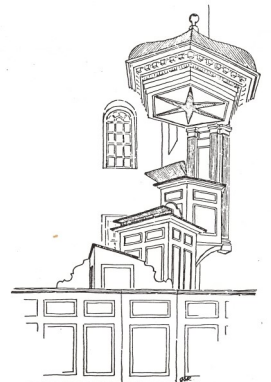
## Almighty God,

who hast given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favor and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer

Prayers for National Life  
18. For our Country





## 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.  
Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays

#### 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**

#### Executive Assistant

**Sue Selz**

#### Nursery Supervisor

**Dawna Spaulding**

## FROM THE RECTOR

### Welcoming New Staff

Aquia Church will welcome two new members of our staff during September.

Gloria Reyes will become our new bookkeeper, effective Sept. 1. She served for over twenty years as an officer with the New York Police Department. Afterward she attended culinary school, relocated to Virginia (joining family here), and worked for a time in food services. Gloria has considerable experience in Stafford and elsewhere with bookkeeping and tax preparation, including time spent in the private sector. She has cleared a nationwide background check and arrives with glowing references. Gloria's time in our office is likely to be concentrated in the middle of the week, and she will bring her skills, expertise, and friendly personality to her employment here. More specifics about her duties will become available in the next few weeks, but she will have responsibility for such areas as accounts payable, reconciliation of financial accounts and records, and management of business documents.

Our new bookkeeper will come in after our longtime parish administrator, Dennise LaBarre, has completed her employment here. Dennise's many talents, experience, attention to detail, and dedication have contributed to her success in that position, and I am confident that those traits will serve her well in her new adventures ahead. We are grateful that Dennise graciously extended her work here by a month beyond her planned retirement date to ensure a smooth transition to the new work that Gloria Reyes will soon undertake. Our executive assistant, Sue Selz, has also provided valuable support during this transition, as have treasurer Chris Arey and advisor Brigit Kane.

Soon after Labor Day, we shall have a seminarian intern, too. Stephen Pecot (pronounced PECK-oh) is about to begin his second of three years (his 'middler' year) in the master of divinity program at Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, as he continues his training toward ordination as deacon and subsequently as



priest. He comes from the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast (southern Alabama and the Florida panhandle) following over two decades of professional work and extensive research in forestry. With two degrees from LSU (Geaux Tigers!), he is married with four children, who alas are not able to join him at seminary but still encourage him across the miles.

During the coming academic year at least, Stephen will contribute to our worship, including reading the lessons from Scripture, leading the Prayers of the People, distributing communion, and preaching. He will be involved with some teaching in our parish and learning about various aspects of priestly duties, including leadership. I shall have some work to do not only one-on-one with Stephen as his direct supervisor, but also in coordination with some staff members at VTS. He will also receive support, criticism, and guidance from a committee of lay advisors, with Gene Cole as chairperson. Basically, all current priests in The Episcopal Church and many clergy in other denominations have held such an internship—often called field education or contextual ministry—as a valuable part of their preparation for ordination, and the opportunity can be one of the most formative experiences in a seminarian's course of study. Aquia is in many respects an ideal place for helping new clergy to grow in their responsibilities, as I first learned over seventeen years ago.

Most parishioners are likely to see more of our seminarian intern than of our bookkeeper, simply given the nature of their tasks. Yet as I have enjoyed getting to know them, I hope that you will enjoy getting acquainted with them, too. I genuinely believe that we shall benefit from their God-given gifts and service here, and that we shall be a blessing for them as well.

*Jay Morris*



## FROM THE ASSISTANT RECTOR

### Preparing for Death

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 your faith has remained central during the pandemic. So, I want to address something that you don't typically hear from me. Over the last few years, we have seen some disturbing trends in how people cope with death and dying (think: the "dying with dignity" movement). The Christian faith has a lot to say about how we ought to die. Let me take a moment to offer some priestly counsel.

First, come to church weekly and listen to the sermon. I say this not out of a sense of self-preservation. This is a matter of incredible importance. St. Paul tells us that faith comes through hearing. When we hear the word of God in Scripture read and hear it proclaimed in the sermon, God creates faith in us. Faith is essential to the Christian. We need to hear the convicting word of God's law preached to us to break through to our sinful hearts. We need the consoling word of the Gospel preached to us so that we can be assured that God's redeeming work in Christ is for us. Hearing the word read and proclaimed is necessary for the Christian. Likewise, when we gather as the church, we support and remind each other that we are one in Christ. This prepares us for death, in that faith assures us of our eternal home.

Second, confess your sins and receive the Eucharist. On Sundays, we either have Morning Prayer or the Holy Eucharist. In both services, we confess our sins. That time is intended to remind us of who we are as sinful people before our all-holy God. We lay before God our sins and our sinfulness so that we are shown clearly that we need a Savior. He has come and offered to us the benefit of his saving work. One

very tangible way that we receive the forgiveness of sins is in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. When we consume the bread and wine, we receive Jesus into ourselves. We are eating his flesh and drinking his blood. When we eat the bread and drink the wine, he is fully present in each of them. This prepares us for death in that when we receive the Eucharist, it is a meal of forgiveness that strengthens the heart and calms the soul.

Third, call your clergy (or have someone call us) when you are near death. This is not always the easiest thing to do, I recognize, but one of our responsibilities is to

care for the dying. I want to be able to soothe the conscience of someone near death that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. The trauma of death can be compounded by guilt from life. Being able to lay

down your burden in confession and hearing that you have already been forgiven everything you have done is cathartic. That prepares us for death as well.

For those who are in Christ Jesus, we are comforted and strengthened by the knowledge that in death "life is changed, not ended" (BCP 349/382). Come to church and listen to the sermon. Confess your sins and receive the Eucharist. Call your clergy when the hour comes. Rest assured that the work done by God in Christ is sufficient for you. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

*In Christ+,  
Fr. James*



### AQUIA CHURCH VESTRY

**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*

**Ron Korth**

*Junior Warden  
Building & Grounds  
Committee Chairperson*

**Lisa Schwartz**

*Administration Committee*

**Chris Wanner**

*Buildings & Grounds Committee*

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## EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

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What a difference a year makes! We may not be out of the woods yet with the waves of the pandemic, but we are proceeding with caution!

I am excited to announce that the ECW will host a reception in the great hall for the Rt. Rev. Jennifer Brooke-Davidson and Aquia's confirmands and their families on Sunday, Sept. 26, immediately following the 10:30 a.m. service. The details of the reception will follow the prevailing health guidelines. We hope you will attend to honor and visit with the confirmands and their families.

We have been working diligently to put together the 64th Annual Fall Fest. It will be held Saturday, Oct. 2, from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. The department chairs have many great ideas, and we all are adjusting to having 98% of our venues outside this year under tents or open areas with coverings such as the portico of the Christian Formation and Fellowship Building. We will offer pork butts, one-pound bags of pulled roasted pork, and lunch from our kitchen. Our silent auction will be located near the parish hall. The book nook department and the

clothing department will be located on the lower level of the parish hall. Check all the other departments out along the sidewalk as you look for the following: crafts, jewelry, garden mart, man-cave, flea market, country store, treasures, ECW table, and kitchen. We have an activity area and a clown show planned for the children (and any adults who love being a child) in attendance.

We are accepting donations for the different departments. A trifold of information is available in the historic church and in the CFFB, or by contacting me: [bkwings\\_n\\_things@yahoo.com](mailto:bkwings_n_things@yahoo.com). The brochure provides details such as: who to contact for pick-up or drop-off of donated items, kitchen donations, and so forth.

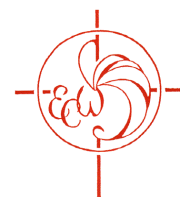
At the church's Annual Meeting, we displayed the sign-up sheets requesting volunteers and items needed from the parish (such as tables and tents), so that all can sign up and support this important event. If you did not attend the Annual Meeting and can donate a little of your time or provide items for the kitchen or one of our other departments, please check the sign-up sheets

outside the historic church or in the CFFB on Sundays.

Searching for a prayer to share that spoke to me about the women of Aquia's ECW, I found the following prayer for women's ministries that was written by the Rev. Peg Williams, who served as Chaplain to the Board of the Chicago ECW:

*Most awesome God, women are and have always been among the first to volunteer, the first to organize, and the first to use their network of friends in Christ to accomplish good works. We give you thanks for bringing us together—women who are willing to contribute their considerable skill to the advancement of your church and to the world. We ask that you support and guide us, and allow each of us to be strengthened by the inspiration of our sisters. All this we ask in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

**Briget Kane**  
ECW President



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## STS. MARY AND MARTHA

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### Worship, Service and Fellowship

July and August have gone by quickly for the ladies of the Sts. Mary and Martha Guild, but we have accomplished a lot. Our inventory for the Fall Fest craft tables is growing with fresh ideas, like fun fabric pumpkins and heart-holding wood angel ornaments. During the month of September, we will meet every Thursday morning to finish our crafts and plan what our 'shop' will look like this year. We are always seeking new members and new ideas, so please join us if you can.

We have a few requests of our parish family:

1) We still need gently used costume jewelry for our very popular jewelry table.

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

3) If you can help on the day of Fall Fest in the craft and jewelry areas, please let us know or sign up on the poster for volunteers found on the picnic table in front of the church every Sunday this month. We plan to work in two-hour shifts.

All ladies of the parish are invited to join our group. Come, enjoy, and learn what the 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 infor-

mation, contact Mary Jane Cole ([maryjane@cfsbw.biz](mailto:maryjane@cfsbw.biz)) or Carolyn Hendrickson ([cvhendrickson35@gmail.com](mailto:cvhendrickson35@gmail.com)).



*Our newest addition: a heart-holding wooden angel ornament*





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## OUTREACH

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**W**e are extremely grateful for the huge amount of school supplies we received during our recent campaign. We had enough to distribute supplies to the Stafford County Department of Social Services and the Jenkins Donelson Foundation. We even had a few left over that we will give to Stafford Junction. (Please see the thank-you note we received from the Jenkins Donelson Foundation, right.)

We are in the planning stages for our annual shoe box collection for Operation Christmas Child. In September there will be a project leader worship; it will kick off with a virtual meeting, during which we will hear encouraging stories from around the world and learn

about project updates and new resources. Next will be a local gathering at Salem Church, where we will exchange ideas and learn from each other.

We will be contacting the Department of Social Services in October to get our list of families and seniors in need of assistance at Christmas. We hope to be able to utilize our little Christmas trees with the gift tags this year. If not, we will do what we did last year and request donations of gift cards.

Aquia's outreach ministry group is not meeting in person at this time; however, we hope to resume meetings in person shortly.

*Johanna Jones*

Dear Ms. Jones and Aquia Episcopal Church Family,

Thank you so much for collecting School Supplies! The Jenkins Donelson Foundation has three upcoming Community Giveaway events. We will distribute the supplies you donated to us to students in Stafford County, Fauquier County, and the District of Columbia within the next few weeks. After enduring more than a year of uncertainty, your generosity will help get students off to a good start this school year.

Partnering with the Aquia Episcopal Church family is always a joy for us. We look forward to future partnerships with you as each of our organizations continues to strive to improve the lives of those in need. Thank you for all you do for others.

Yours In Christ,

*Carolyn Jenkins*

Executive Director Jenkins Donelson Foundation

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## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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**S**unday school is now available on Sunday mornings (9:30—10:15 a.m.) on the lower level of the Christian Formation and Fellowship Building for students in pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Registration is available throughout the year on the church Website. Go to [www.aquiachurch.org](http://www.aquiachurch.org); scroll down to "Sunday School Registration," then click on the Sunday school icon.

Busy bags are available again in the historic church for our youngest members. A child's Bible, activity pages, drawing paper, and crayons are available in canvas bags when you enter the church. Please take just one bag per family and return bags at the end of the service.



Also, save the date: our annual Trunk-or-Treat event will be held on Saturday, Oct. 30, so stay tuned for more details.

*Kristen Morgan*



## Fall Fest Silent Auction

Saturday, October 2 9:00 a.m.—12:00 noon

### See 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 silent 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 on Sundays or ask Mary Jane Cole ([maryjane@cfsw.biz](mailto:maryjane@cfsw.biz)).

#### From Fellow Parishioners:

- **Slow Roasted Pork Butt** from the Fall Fest kitchen

#### From Merchants, Businesses, and Restaurants:

- **Courtyard by Marriott in Historic Downtown Fredericksburg:** guestroom for two, for one night, a \$200 value
- **610 Car Wash:** 5 deluxe car wash tickets
- **Publix:** \$100 gift card
- **Site & Sound Theatres:** 2 tickets to their production of *David* in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, March 12-Dec. 31, 2022
- **Picker’s Supply:** Gift card for one free guitar lesson
- **Corky’s of Fredericksburg:** \$25 gift card (expires Nov. 1, 2021)
- **Irish Eyes:** certificate to research your family name history and coat of arms
- **Ulman’s Jewelry:** Four Islington goblets by Royal Doulton
- **Primitives by Kathy:** two paintings on wood blocks by artists with different abilities
- **“Enjoy the Little Things”:** a painting from Shoppes at Caroline Square LLC
- **Meadows Farms:** \$20 gift card
- **Carlos O’Kelly’s Inspired Mex:** gift card for 4 free entrees
- **Wawa:** gift basket
- **Jabberwocky Children’s Books & Toys:** \$15 gift certificate



We also received these wonderful pieces of nostalgia (pictured below) from a friend of the parish:

- **Antique 3-gallon pickle crock:** Robinson Ransbottom pottery crock #3 crown stamp. Salt glazed finish with dark brown interior.
- **Vintage Carved Maple Rocking Chair**

Items may be listed separately or grouped together into single bidding sheets at the discretion of the auction committee.

Do you have something to offer: perhaps an antique or a better White Elephant item, a bottle of wine, 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 Mary Jane Cole know what gift you want to contribute.



Tell your friends and neighbors about our great list! Follow us on **Facebook: “Fall Fest at Aquia Church,”** “Like” us, and “Share”!

We have one more important update: this year the auction will be a **Silent Auction** with viewing and bidding starting two weeks in advance on Sundays, Sept. 19 and 26, in the great hall of the Christian Formation and Fellowship Building. On the day of Fall Fest—Saturday, Oct. 2—the items will be out on the auction tables under the trees by 9 a.m. The bidding sheets will be pulled at noon. We are seeking more help with this event on the day of the Fall Fest. If you can give an hour or more of your time at the auction tables, please contact Mary Jane Cole ([maryjane@cfsw.biz](mailto:maryjane@cfsw.biz)).



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.





## Results from 2021 Annual Meeting

At our parish's annual meeting on Sunday, Aug. 22, parishioners Chris Bowie, Michael Golasz, and Lisa Schwartz were elected by acclamation to full terms on the vestry; they will serve until the 2024 annual meeting. An audio recording of the sermon from that Sunday and an audio recording of the business session (with reports

from the senior warden, junior warden, treasurer, and rector) are available on our church website [www.AquiaChurch.org](http://www.AquiaChurch.org); look immediately under the rotating photographs, click the button for "Sermons" (with the headphones symbol), then click the appropriate link.

*Jay Morris*

## FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

### SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS AT AQUIA CHURCH

*New Babies:* Thanksgiving for the birth of a child will be offered as part of a worship service as needed. Please call the church office the week prior if your family would like to be included in this celebration. 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 being deployed in military or other governmental service.

### 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 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.

### Aquia Church Prayer List

#### September 2021

Kevin Beezhold, Rhett Blythe and Family,  
Debbie Byers, Donny Davis, Paula Davis,  
Robert & JoAnn Feldman, Lori, Ken Luehrs,  
Pat Moncure, Rebecca Poole, Arnie Schwartz,  
Scott Smith, O.D. Taylor, the Rev. David &  
Lois Thabet, John & Pam Tompkins, Gayle  
Tompkins, Kenneth Tompkins, Tom Tremper,  
Patrick Weber, Jaxson Wiser, Walt & Elizabeth Yager.

## How to reach us:



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

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

(540) 659-4007

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





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## VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

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**July 20, 2021**

**In Attendance:** The Rev. Jay Morris, Rector; Chris Arey, Treasurer; Bill Hoffman, Senior Warden; Ron Korth, Junior Warden; Charlie Bingay, Dickie Boes, Chris Bowie, Bob Brandon, Michael Golasz, Chris Wanner

### Business Session

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

### Treasurer's Report

- General Fund checking is strong due to receiving more funds than forecasted.
- Online giving is +30%.
- Purchase of 5 cemetery spaces at the total cost of \$7,500.00 by the Parlier family will be reflected in the Cemetery Fund.

### Minutes from Last Meeting June (15, 2021)

Unanimously approved.

### Old, Continued, and New Business

- **R-2021-18 Policy about Contracts:** Re-sent as it was originally sent. Sr. Warden and Administration Committee have no further clarifications.
- **Amendments to R-2021-18 proposed:** Paragraph 4 "such matters as;" Paragraph 6 "for lack of funding;" Paragraph 7 "he" changed to "the" (reflects a typographical error and is not a clarification). Resolution unanimously approved as amended.
- **Parish Annual Meeting:** Vestry Elections: Chris Bowie and Michael Golasz will stand for full terms. Other parishioners purported to be running for the vestry. Meeting will be held Sunday, Aug. 22, 2021, at 9 a.m. Some service times will be retained. The annual meeting may recess for 10:30 a.m. ser-

vice, and then resume after the conclusion of the service.

- **R-2021-21: Adjustments to 2021 Budget** Unanimously approved.
- **Delegate Positions to the Diocesan Annual Convention** Bill Hoffman and Michael Golasz nominated by the Rector as delegates to the General Convention, with Chris Arey to serve as alternate. Unanimously approved.

### Reports from Committees:

- **Administration Committee:** Cleaning contract with Robynn's Nest expires in 7 days; Robynn has agreed to continue the service contract with the only change in the contract to reflect cleaning the great hall on Thursday or no later than Friday to prepare for Sunday use of the hall.
- **Finance Committee:** No further report.
- **Building and Grounds Committee:** waiting for Aces Electric to contact the Junior Warden about running an electrical line to the new on-demand water heater in the kitchen of the great hall. Pioneer Roofing has been contacted regarding loose copper shingles on the roof of the historic church, with Pioneer Roofing responding that it is not a warranty issue. More information will be forthcoming.
- **Warden Reports:** No further report.
- **Clergy Report:** as submitted; application for the open bookkeeper position has been received but not evaluated at this date. Dennise LaBarre has graciously offered to serve in bookkeeper position until said position is filled. \$3,240.00 has been received toward purchase of the new sound system for the historic church.



## *Vestry Highlights*

### Good of the Order, Closing Prayer and Adjournment

- Gift certificate for Virginia B&B Association has been secured for Dennise LaBarre in appreciation for her years of service to Aquia Episcopal Church as she looks forward to retirement from the position of parish administrator, and a donation to Stafford SPCA will be made in honor of Dennise, with both gifts coming from the vestry.

**Prayer and Adjournment:** The Rev. Jay Morris

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





Aquia Episcopal Church  
Post Office Box 275  
Stafford, VA  
22555

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



*"The Lord is  
my strength  
and my  
song..."*



Exodus 15:2

As I am currently leading a Wednesday evening Bible study series on the Book Mark, I have needed to turn to some resources for guidance about this Gospel—the chronologically first one written, according to most scholars of the matter, even if it appears second in the canon of the New Testament. The Gospel of Mark has not enjoyed a prominent place in biblical scholarship for a very long time, for a variety of reasons. Among them: Mark was for centuries regarded as a summary of Matthew or perhaps an abridgement of Matthew and Luke, the historical figure of Mark was known not to have been an apostle or some other first-hand eyewitness of Jesus Christ, and nearly all of the material in Mark appears also in Matthew or in Luke or in both—with the assumption being that there is little of unique value in Mark. Yet in the last several decades, there has been a burst of scholarly attention to Mark, if for no other reason than this: assuming that Mark's Gospel really was the first such document written and circulated, then it surely has crucial importance for understanding Jesus Christ and the spread of his Good News, the growth of the early Church, and the development of the New Testament. Also, there has been revived consideration of the early claims that the historical Mark had been an occasional traveling companion of Paul and a close co-worker with Peter, such that Mark could be presumed to have had access to eyewitness testimony about Jesus from these apostles. Moreover, even if much of the material in Mark also appears in other Gospels, isn't it quite possible that Mark the evangelist is doing something with his material that is different—perhaps even salutary—from what the other evangelists do with their material? There remain some intriguing questions about this Gospel that deserve inquiry, such as: Why doesn't Mark tell us anything about the conception, birth, and infancy about Jesus in the way that Matthew and Luke do? Why does it seem that everything in Mark's Gospel happens *immediately*, given the frequent recurrence of that word? And where exactly should Mark's Gospel end: in chapter 16 after verse 8 (according to many ancient manuscripts—even if that ending seems rather abrupt and quite unsatisfying by comparison with the ways that the other Gospels end), or in chapter 16 after verse 20?

For answers about these questions and related matters, I have found a few books particularly helpful, and they might interest you as well. In studying the Book of Mark, one of my favorite go-to guides for quite some time has been *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* (Hendrickson, 2002) by Francis J. Moloney. In 362 pages of text, Moloney explains Mark passage by passage with an emphasis on helping readers understand the narrative flow in the Gospel alongside understanding details in the biblical text, in the hopes that one can see both the forest *and* the trees—not only one or the other, which is what often happens when biblical commentaries provide overview that is too broad or simplistic, on the one hand, or on the other hand provide so much analysis and so many details that one loses sight of the big picture. The commentary I have begun using rather often in this current Bible study series is Darrell Bock's more recent *Mark* (Cambridge University Press, 2015) in the New Cambridge Bible Commentary series. Bock's book is officially a bit longer than Moloney's at nearly 400 pages of text; but Bock conveniently supplies the NRSV translation of each passage being discussed, Bock is more succinct than Moloney, and Bock includes a number of exegetical details that Moloney does not (probably in light of subsequent research). Each of these two commentaries present readers with a clear understanding of Mark's Gospel. A third and even more comprehensive resource is *A Theology of Mark's Gospel: Good News about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God* (Zondervan, 2015) by David E. Garland, which is part of an impressive series of volumes on Biblical Theology of the New Testament. Roughly one hundred pages of Garland's book provide "a literary and theological reading of Mark's Gospel," meaning a unit-by-unit interpretation of Mark's content based in part on literary style and patterns and in part on theological substance, in much the same way that Moloney and Bock do. That section of commentary on the biblical text is preceded by some sixty pages of preliminary material setting the stage about such issues as authorship, date, setting, intended audience, and so forth; Garland's treatment of these introductory matters is more thorough than what Moloney or Bock supply. Yet the particularly valuable material in Garland's book are the twelve chapters that provide extensive insight into a range of important themes in this Gospel, from Mark's understanding of the person and work of Jesus to Mark's treatment of the kingdom of God, from Mark's views about discipleship and mission to Mark's perspective on the end-times and the ending of his book. While Garland's book is surely fulsome at over 550 pages, the physical book itself is surprisingly neither heavy nor cumbersome for reading. Having Garland's volume is effectively like having one-stop shopping for most anything an inquiring reader would want to know about Mark. Moloney is a Roman Catholic priest of the Salesian order and a New Testament scholar originally from Australia who taught for some time at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.; Bock is an evangelical Protestant who teaches at Dallas Theological Seminary; Garland is a Southern Baptist pastor and a New Testament scholar focusing on the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) who teaches at the George W. Truett Theological Seminary of Baylor University. All three of these prolific authors here write very clearly in an engaging style, with footnotes at the bottom of each page subordinating references to other materials and conveniently continuing discussions from the main text that could distract the reader from the overall flow of their work.