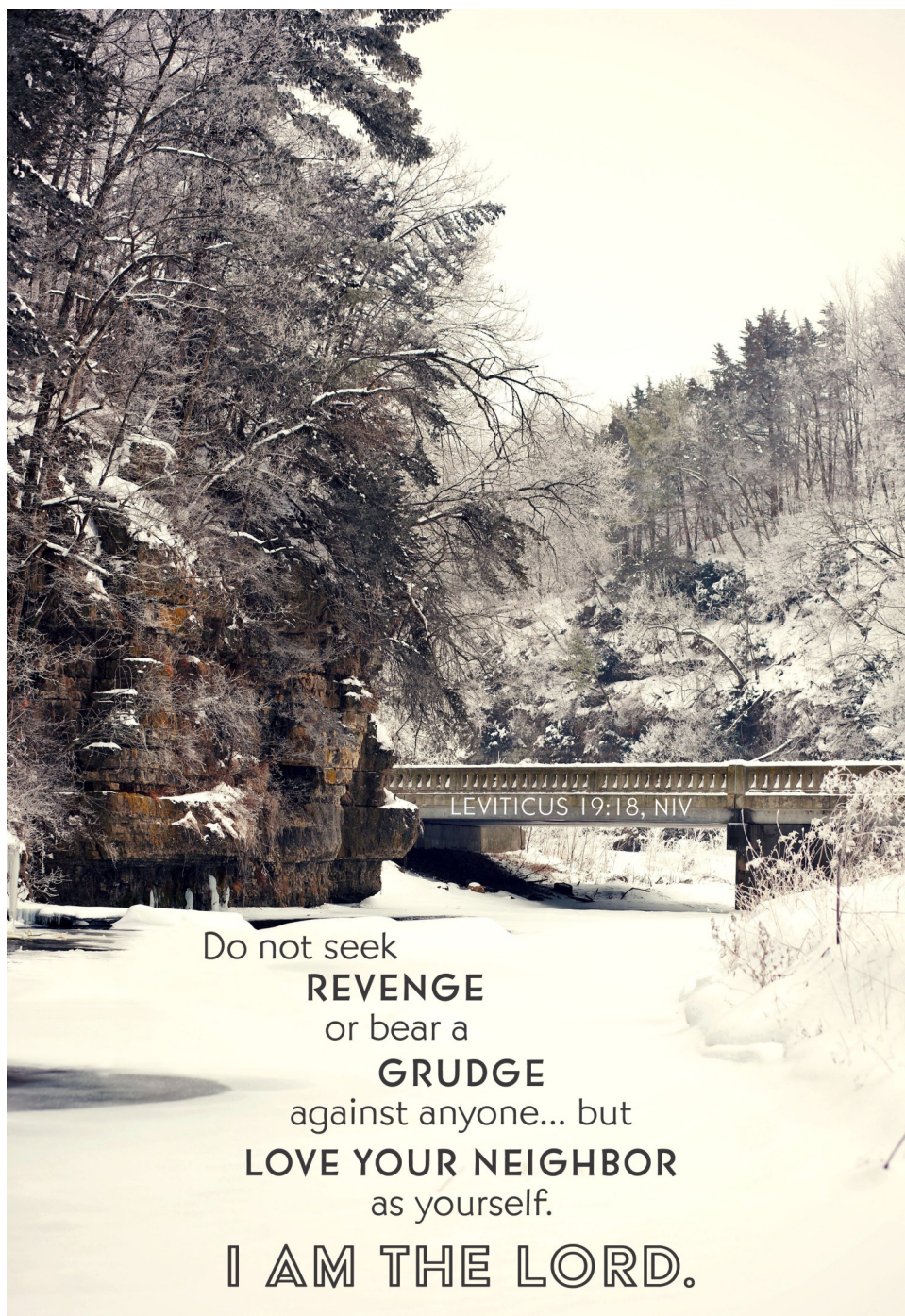




**AQUIA**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

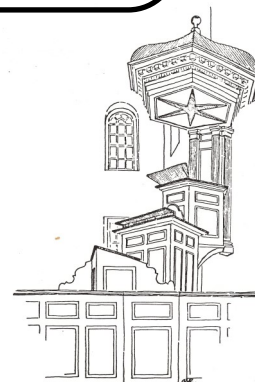
# Cross Section

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



## INSIDE . .

- When life hands you lemons, find opportunities for spiritual growth! (pg. 2)
- Discover more about the early history of Anglicanism (pg. 3)
- Christian Education (pg. 4)
- ECW shares God's love through many activities (pg. 4)
- Meet for fellowship, book study, prayer & crafts with Sts. Mary & Martha Guild (pg. 5)
- Vestry Highlights (pgs. 6-8)
- Appreciation for Christmas flowers (pg. 9)
- Observations about pandemic adjustments (pg. 11)





## CROSS SECTION

### Aquia Episcopal Church

2938 Richmond Hwy.  
Stafford, Va.

*Mailing address:*  
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.  
Tuesday– Friday,

#### 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

**Sue Selz**

#### Bookkeeper

**Gloria Reyes**

#### Nursery Supervisor

**Dawna Spaulding**

## FROM THE RECTOR

### When Life Hands You Lemons

**Y**ou know the proverb, “When life hands you lemons, make lemonade.” (Better yet is the version that parishioner Pat Moncure might use: “When life hands you lemons, make lemon tarts.”) There’s something significant in that statement. While life inevitably has distractions, disappointments, and even disasters, how we Christians respond to them—either despair or development—can make all the difference in the world.

This January provided more bitterly cold temperatures and more piled-up snow than we probably desired; and in February we might face more precipitation, more closings at school and work, more power outages, and more inconvenience. Between the recent past, the prospect of a long winter, and the problems of the pandemic, many of us are getting some version of cabin fever or winter doldrums or seasonal affective disorder. I’m ready for this bleak midwinter to burst into spring, but perhaps we’ll have to see what the groundhog says.

Meanwhile, rather than retreat into our turtle-shells and withdraw from life altogether just because of winter and the pandemic, both of your clergy aim to be productive in ways that don’t always require venturing out. Recently Father Rickenbaker and I explored the English Reformation and the rise of Anglicanism through a seminary course that had to be conducted virtually; we completed a bunch of independent reading at home and saved some travel expenses. I also started a 6-week Zoom course about the Book of Exodus offered by Yale Divinity School, and I am immersing myself in the next book of the Bible (Leviticus) in preparation for my current Wednesday evening series on holiness. Furthermore, both Father Rickenbaker and I are undertaking some study and reflection about the Beatitudes with a clergy group that includes Aquia’s former assistant rector, the Reverend Connor Newlun, and other friends—partly for the sake of con-

tinuing education, of course, but also for the sake of fellowship and camaraderie in these days when many folks are feeling a bit isolated. These steps are intended to strengthen our preaching and teaching for the time ahead.

I’ve also commenced other advance work during these cold and COVID-filled days that permit fewer occasions for in-person gatherings, including planning for our annual Lenten series, looking ahead toward Bible studies and Morning Call topics across this new year, devising some plans with seminarian Stephen Pecot, getting the new vestry organized, and supporting other groups for which I have responsibilities.

My hope is that you, too, are finding opportunities for spiritual growth and refreshment while we await warmer weather and the weakening of COVID’s grip on us. If you have been reluctant to attend Aquia Church in person lately, have you discovered how much we offer over Facebook for worship, prayer, and Bible study? If you are currently less able to visit relatives and friends than you wish, are you instead able to call them or catch up with them through e-mail or text-messages? If your ministry group’s ability to gather together is limited right now, is there some other form of ministry you can enjoy safely on your own? While you have been cooped up indoors, have you been able to start some project around your home or to catch up on some much-needed rest? If what your clergy are offering electronically for Bible study doesn’t interest you immediately, would you welcome some wisdom from us about other topics for reflection or other materials for reading that might be more appealing?

Often enough, life hurls at us things we don’t exactly want. When this happens, we can succumb to sourness, or we can take those lemons and convert them into something more fruitful. Think of how Jesus did that on the cross.

*Jay Morris*





## FROM THE ASSISTANT RECTOR

### Scripture and the Sacraments in the 16th Century

**D**ear 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 your desire to grow in faith. And I am especially thankful to God for your support in my own growth as well. To that end, I wanted to update you about a continuing education course that Fr. Jay and I took in January about the early history of Anglicanism. I have been an Anglican my whole life, but I have only recently taken time to learn the history of Anglicanism.

The course, offered through Nashotah House Theological Seminary, was taught by the eminent Thomas Cranmer scholar, the Rev. Canon Dr. Ashley Null. Canon Null as written extensively on Cranmer, the English reformer and the father, in effect, of Anglicanism. The course took us back to the beginning of the reign of King Henry VIII, the most famous (or perhaps infamous) Tudor king. How did Anglicanism really begin? The oft-repeated contention is that the Anglican Church began because of Henry's desire to divorce Catherine of Aragon. But the truth is that Cranmer and others had already found themselves enthralled with the works of the continental reformers like Martin Luther and Martin Bucer. The question of the couple's divorce (or really their annulment) was something Cranmer addressed when he was already well on his way toward reforming England.

One of the major points of the Reformation in England was the importance of Scripture. Thomas Cranmer and other English reformers like Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley understood Scripture to be of central importance to the faith. Much like their continental forebear, Martin Luther, they believed Scripture to contain all things necessary for salvation—something which flew in the face of the Roman Catholic position both then and now. The Reformers believed that if it is not in Scripture, it is not necessary for salvation. Cranmer was also convicted of the fact that Scripture teaches justification by faith

alone, which is another point that put him in direct opposition to the Roman Catholic Church both then and now. Cranmer's view of the Sacraments also proved problematic for Rome. For instance, he came to deny the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Mary Tudor, also known as Bloody Mary, eventually had him executed. He was martyred by being burned at the stake for his belief about Scripture as well as his beliefs about the Sacraments.

Thomas Cranmer and the other reformers were not right about everything. (I, for one, believe that Christ is really present in the Eucharist. When Jesus says "This is my body" and "This is my blood," I believe that he means what he says.) But they did understand the heart of the matter. If we are not justified by grace alone, through faith alone, and in Christ alone, then Christ died for nothing. If we could earn any part of God's favor, then what was the point of God's Son dying for us? This is the hinge of the faith. Fr. Jay, my wife Rachel, and I all vowed at our ordinations that we believe the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God and to contain all things necessary for salvation. We stand behind this view and we proclaim it from the pulpit. I thank God for the witness of Cranmer and the reformers for retrieving for us those doctrines that had been lost over the centuries.

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*



### AQUA CHURCH VESTRY

**Charlie Bingay**  
*Senior Warden  
Assistant Treasurer*

**Dickie Boes**  
*Finance Committee Chairperson  
Building & Grounds Committee*

**Chris Bowie**  
*Administration Committee*

**Bob Brandon**  
*Junior Warden  
Building & Grounds Committee  
Chairperson*

**Carrol Frederick**  
*Administration Committee  
Chairperson*

**Michael Golasz**  
*Building & Grounds Committee*

**Carolyn Hendrickson**  
*Administration Committee*

**Sarah Kirby**  
*Administration Committee*

**Anna Rall**  
*Register  
Finance Committee*

**Lisa Schwartz**  
*Administration Committee*

**Penny Stevens**  
*Building & Grounds Committee*

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## EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

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February is the shortest month in the calendar year. It is a very busy month in what we celebrate. It is the start of the Lunar New Year, also known as the Chinese New Year. We celebrate many cultures and birthdays, we honor presidents, and perhaps the most notable occasion is Valentine's Day. It is widely known as the day to celebrate "love," which can be expressed in a variety of ways.

The mission of the Episcopal Church Women is to share the love of God by making Christ known in the world through prayer, education, con-

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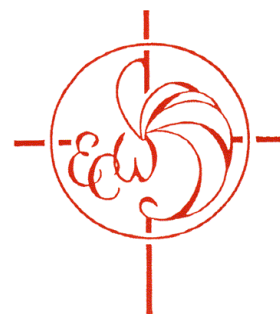
*... when I wake each day, I am blessed by knowing God's love. It is also important to remember to love and share God's love in our lives and our Christian activities and missions.*

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cern for others, and joyful service. "Do everything in love," the Bible directs us (1 Corinthians 16:14). Or as the Bible also explains: "No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us" (1 John 4:12).

We learn about God's love for us throughout the Bible. "We love because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). We also learn the definition of love: it is patient, it is kind, it does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud, it does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs (1 Corinthians 13:4-5).

Touching on love seemed appropriate for Feb. 14, the day we traditionally celebrate love. In pondering what I would write about for our newsletter, I began to think about other days of the calendar year and realized that when I wake each day, I am blessed by knowing God's love. It is also important to remember to love and share God's love in our lives and our Christian activities and missions.



Some of our yearly activities include Heritage Sunday in May, the spring UTO Ingathering, Fall Fest (Saturday, Oct. 1), Homecoming Sunday, the fall UTO Ingathering, and the diocesan ECW Annual Meeting.

Here are a few of our partner ministries: Aquia's Care Team, Take Them a Meal, Fall Fest, and Aquia's Table. If one piques your interest and you would like to hear more about it, please contact me: send me an e-mail ([bkwings\\_nthings@yahoo.com](mailto:bkwings_nthings@yahoo.com)), or ask the church office for my phone number.

**Briget Kane**  
ECW President

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## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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Aquia Church continues to offer in-person Sunday school for children in preschool through twelfth grades on Sundays, 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Registration is available throughout the year on the church's website ([www.AquiaChurch.org](http://www.AquiaChurch.org)).

We now offer a Christian parenting group during the same time as Sunday school in the downstairs conference room of the CFFB. All parents, grandparents, and caregivers of children are welcome to join us for some fellowship and discussions geared for those of us

raising children as Christians. Contact Kristen Morgan or Rachel Rickenbaker if you'd like to know more.

Aquia Church traditionally offers a First Communion class for children in elementary school during Lent. If you are interested in a First Communion class this spring for your child or grandchild, please contact Kristen Morgan ([christianed@aquiachurch.org](mailto:christianed@aquiachurch.org)).

**Kristen Morgan**

Children's  
Education  
News



## STS. MARY AND MARTHA

### Worship, Service and Fellowship

The Sts. Mary and Martha Guild would like to thank everyone who dropped by to shop at our ECW Advent gift tables in the great hall. We thank you for your patronage and for your generosity. Our remaining inventory is now packed up; but if you should need Aquia Church note cards, a church cookbook, a pocket prayer quilt square, or one of these charming tea towels featuring Pat Moncure's handwritten recipes (pictured at right) for a gift, just send us an e-mail. We would be glad to get it to you.

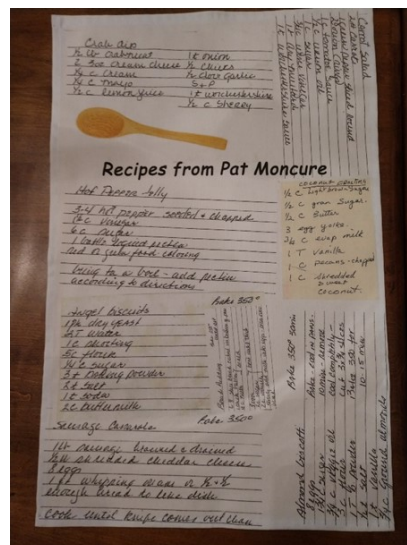
In February we shall continue to enjoy our very encouraging study book *Unshakable Hope* by Max Lucado. Plus, we return to working together on crafts for the Fall Fest craft room. We are constantly looking for new ideas for the craft room. If you have a fall or Christmas decoration or ornament that you think we could make, please share

it with us. We appreciate fresh ideas to keep our inventory up-to-date and interesting.

Please do consider joining the Sts. Mary and Martha Guild for Morning Prayer led by a member of our clergy, followed by a simple study and wonderful fellowship. Our meetings, which are scheduled for the first, third, and fifth (when applicable) Thursday mornings of the month, begin at 9:30 and end by noon. We have plenty of room around our table for you and a friend.

Please note that we do not meet when winter weather closes Stafford County schools or delays their opening. For further information, reach out to Mary Jane Cole ([maryjane@cfsw.biz](mailto:maryjane@cfsw.biz)) or Carolyn Hendrickson ([cvhendrickson35@gmail.com](mailto:cvhendrickson35@gmail.com)).

**Mary Jane Cole**  
**Carolyn Hendrickson**



Pat Moncure's handwritten recipes adorn this tea towel, one of the many items available through the Sts. Mary and Martha Guild.

## AQUIA'S TABLE

As Aquia's Table continues to serve hot meals weekly to an average of over 200 guests (and sometimes as many as 300), our goal to serve healthy, balanced and nutritional meals has not changed. We have been able to sustain our ministry because of the commitment of volunteers, community partners, food drives, and donations from our parish family.

Aquia's Table is starting 2022 with plans to hold our annual golf tournament again. The tournament is our annual fundraiser, which supports our ministry's mission. If you don't play golf, we have many things you can do instead that will help ensure the success of our event. Our silent auction will receive donated items as well as bids, with early-bird bidding through lunch

### Come Tee Off With Us May 6!

on golf day Friday, May 6. It's not too early to make your plans. We will be accepting team registrations, individual registrations, hole sponsors, and event sponsorships at the silver, gold, and platinum levels. Mark your calendars! More information to follow.

*Through the help of volunteers and patrons alike, Aquia's Table has successfully provided free meals and support to all who come to our campus nearly every Wednesday night. We look to continue our positive impact in the community with your help. Aquia's Table is an outreach ministry of Aquia Episcopal Church.*

**Briget Kane**



**Come tee off with us Friday, May 6!**

**Format:** 4-Man Scramble  
**When:** Friday, May 6  
**Check-in:** begins @ 7:30 a.m.  
**Shotgun Start @ 9 a.m.**  
**Where:** Augustine Golf Club  
 76 Monument Drive  
 Stafford, VA 22554  
**Cost:** \$110 per player



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## VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

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Nov. 16, 2021, (via Zoom)

In Attendance: The Rev. Jay Morris, Rector; the Rev. James Rickenbaker, Assistant Rector; Stephen Pecot, Seminarian; Senior Warden, Bill Hoffman; Junior Warden, Ron Korth; Treasurer, Chris Arey; Charlie Bingay, Dickie Boes, Chris Bowie, Bob Brandon, Carol Frederick, Michael Golasz, Lisa Schwartz, Penny Stevens, Chris Wanner

### Business Session

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



### Treasurer's Report:

- Draft Treasurer's Report sent
- Training with new bookkeeper is ongoing
- Revenue from Fall Fest reflects positive cash flow
- General Fund checking balance is up
- Some expenses up due to contracted payments (Robynn's Nest Cleaning)
- Online giving up
- \$364,931.00 in pledges received: +10% compared to a year ago
- \$856,000.00 left for mortgage for CFFB
- Branson Tree Service expenses for tree removal at Clifton Chapel will be paid from Clifton Chapel fund

### Minutes from Previous Meeting

(Oct. 19, 2021): Approved by vestry.

**Old Business:** No old business of significance.

### New Business:

- **R-2021-26: Reallocation of Moncure Robinson Trust Money Market Funds to the Moncure Robinson Trust Fund Account with the Trustees of the Funds** (Finance Committee)

⇒ Since there are no imminent repairs planned for the historic church, some funds can be transferred to longer-term investment for greater return rather than left in shorter-term account earning money-market interest (0.03%). Money would be transferred over a period, rather than one considerable sum.

⇒ Unanimously approved by the vestry.

### Reports from Committees:

*Administration Committee:* Purchase of AED defibrillator and a schedule for safety training is still desired. Otherwise, yearly goals have been met.

*Finance Committee:* Other than resolution R-2021-26, no new information of significance to report.

### Building and Grounds Committee:

- Fall cleanup date is Dec. 4, due to late leaf drop.
- Peyton plaque: suggestion to install additional structure that would support the weight of the plaque on the fence, with repainting of the rails to clean up work area to follow.
- Lines painted on the parking lot will assist with successful parking.

### Reports from Junior Warden and Senior Warden:

Junior Warden: no further report.  
Senior Warden: no further report.

### Report from Rector:

- Continuation of Vestry Nut/Candy Sales: Sales continue into the fall: some product still on hand, but certain product is running out. Having vestry members staffing some sales tables after services would be helpful

to clear out available product. The first Sunday in December would be a wonderful opportunity to do so.



*Vestry Highlights*

- Annual Pledge Campaign for 2022: 57 adult pledge cards for \$270,907.92.
- ⇒ 5 child/youth pledge cards for \$416.00 (as of 11/15/2021).
- ⇒ Majority of pledge cards likely to be submitted by mid-December.
- ⇒ Number of pledges and dollar amount increased from previous pledge campaigns.
- Highlights from 227th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Virginia:
- ⇒ Resolution 4: to set up impact fund for racial justice and healing.
- ⇒ Resolution 10: 10 million dollars in the next five years to be used as reparations for African Americans, indigenous Americans, and other Americans of color. The resolution did not specify from where the money would come; land sale by Diocese was suggested as a possible source.
- ⇒ Resolution 1: New plan for churches to give to the Diocese of Virginia: church income sets up a certain proportion. A new, simpler formula with an expectation that every church in the diocese would give totality of pledged and plate income at a certain percentage (10%). Take the three-year average, 10% of which would be pledged to the diocese: applied to every church regardless of demographics of the church. Based upon biblical 10% tithe. Build-up would be gradual over the three-year average. Exceptions would be allowed, and

*Continued on next page ...*





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churches could apply for an exemption (due to considerable hit upon income). Indebtedness would be considered due to construction costs and other circumstances. Requests for exemptions would be made in June. What does that mean for Aquia Episcopal Church? Our construction loan may qualify us for an exemption, but quite soon will have to consider how to fulfill the resolution. No penalty was mentioned regarding not fulfilling the pledge.

• Draft Budget for 2022:

- ⇒ For consideration over the next month.
- ⇒ Requests from ministry groups have been able to be met in the draft budget.
- ⇒ Some figures based upon 2021 budget history.
- ⇒ Diocesan recommended 1.99% increase in compensation to church

employees as a cost-of-living increase.

- ⇒ Office operation hours may be amended due to retirement of Denise LaBarre; extended hours may be needed from Sue Selz to ensure that tasks are completed.
- ⇒ 3% increase was suggested by both Administration Committee and Finance Committee as a raise above the 1.99% COLA recommended by the diocese.
- ⇒ Other specifics of the budget to be discussed at the December vestry meeting.

**Upcoming Dates and Information:**

- 12/21: Vestry meeting
- 1/9/2022: Parish's Annual Meeting (in case of snow/ice, backup date is one week later).
- 1/15/2022: Vestry Retreat, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. (tentative day and time).



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

Respectfully submitted,

**Carol F. Korth**

Register, Aquia Episcopal Church

## VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

**Dec. 21, 2021 (via Zoom)**

**In Attendance:** The Rev. Jay Morris, Rector; the Rev. James Rickenbaker, Assistant Rector; Stephen Pecot, Seminarian; Senior Warden, Bill Hoffman; Junior Warden, Ron Korth; Treasurer, Chris Arey; Charlie Bingay, Dickie Boes, Christine Bowie, Bob Brandon, Carrol Frederick, Michael Golasz, Lisa Schwartz, Penny Stevens.

**Business Session**

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

**Treasurer's Report:**

- New bookkeeper is in training
- \$202,987 is available for mortgage on CFFB

- \$395,170.18 total pledge offerings through November 2021

**Minutes from Previous Meeting:**

- **R-2021-26: Reallocation of Moncure Robinson Trust Money Market Funds to the Moncure Robinson Trust Fund Account with the Trustees of the Funds** (approved 11/16)
- Minutes unanimously approved



CHURCH  
BUSINESS

**New Business:**

- **R-2021-27: Designation of Parsonage Allowance for the Rector** (Finance Committee): Internal Revenue Service allows for member of clergy to claim more than what was originally paid out in cash by the church, and there is no additional expenditure of funds from Aquia Church involved. Vestry unanimously approved the resolution.
- **R-2021-28: Designation of Parsonage Allowance for the Assistant Rector** (Finance Committee): Internal Revenue Service allows for member of clergy to claim more than what was originally paid out in cash by the

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## VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

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church, and there is no additional expenditure of funds from Aquia Church involved. Vestry unanimously approved the resolution.

- **Candidates for Election to Vestry** (Carolyn Hendrickson, Sarah Kirby, Anna Rall, Penny Stevens). Vestry unanimously approved the slate of candidates for election to vestry in January 2022.

## Budget\$Planning

- **R-2021-29: Adoption of 2022 Budget** (Finance Committee):

- ⇒ Administration Committee's recommendation was to increase church employees' cost of living adjustment to 4.5%. The proposed budget reflected the increase.
- ⇒ After all was considered, the proposed budget has a \$1,106 surplus.
- ⇒ After much discussion, careful review, and some minor modifications, the vestry unanimously approved the budget for 2022.

- **R-2021-30: Sale of Clifton Chapel Property** (Administration Committee)

- ⇒ St. Herman of Alaska Orthodox Church (SHAOC) has offered to purchase Clifton Chapel for \$20,000.00, with \$10,000.00 deposit in cash and \$10,000.00 balance to be paid within five years and with all closing costs to be paid by SHAOC.
- ⇒ Anticipated costs to maintain and repair Clifton Chapel buildings ensure that Aquia Episcopal Church will be spending considerable monies from the general fund if we retain ownership of the property.
- ⇒ Once an Orthodox bishop consecrates church property, SHAOC cannot ever sell the property, thus

preserving the intent for continued Christian ministry.

- ⇒ Proceeds from the sale would be applied to the 1960 Aquia Church parish house for repairs to that building.
- ⇒ The resolution was passed as submitted and amended (typos and clarifications) by the vestry, though not unanimously.

### Reports from Committees:

*Administration Committee:* No new information added to the current goals.

*Finance Committee:* Move to electronic billing for some recurring bills will be enacted in order to reduce the number of written checks coming from the office.

*Building and Grounds Committee:* Striping of parking lot and repainting of disabled persons' parking spaces has been completed.

**Reports from Junior Warden and Senior Warden:** Wardens have no additional information to add.

### Upcoming Dates:

12/24: Christmas Eve worship (4:30 p.m., 7 p.m., and 10 p.m., with Christmas music 30 minutes before each service)  
12/25: Christmas Day worship (10 a.m.)  
1/6/2022: Feast of the Epiphany worship (7 p.m.)  
1/9/2022: Parish's Annual Meeting (9 a.m.) (in case of snow/ice, backup date is one week later, 1/16/2022).  
1/15/2022: Vestry Retreat (9 a.m. – 3 p.m.) (tentative day and time).  
1/18/2022: Vestry Meeting (7 p.m. via Zoom).

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

Respectfully submitted,

*Carol F. Korth*

Register, Aquia Episcopal Church



### Report from Rector:

- Continuation of vestry nut/candy sales: some product has been eliminated through sale of the inventory; buy-one-get-one-free option will be available after 12/26 for parishioners to purchase the remaining product.
- Annual Pledge Campaign for 2022: 87 adult pledge cards for \$441,057.92 and 5 child/youth pledge cards for \$416.00 (as of 12/20).





## FLOWER GUILD

### Appreciation to the Flower Guild and Helpers for Christmas

Betsy Husser and I wish to extend much gratitude to the flower guild for all the greening and preparation for Christmas. We all came together and it was a success!

Thanks to Jean Bitner and her daughter Sharon, Patricia Springer, Christine Bowie, Margaret Hedger, Penny Stevens, and Barb Bingay, and special thanks to Chris Arey for all the work you did. I am sure we all thank you for making the sanctuary so beautiful for Christmas. We also want to thank Fred and Betty Haeberer and Wendy Osborn for the donations of greenery for the windows.

We hope that the Christmas flowers blessed you this season, and that you all have a happy and healthy 2022!

*Sheryl Colliver & Betsy Husser*



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## FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

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### FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

**Burials:** *"Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord: And let the light perpetual shine upon them"* (BCP 486/502)

Jim Thomas Elkins, 1926-2021

### SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS AT AQUIA CHURCH

**New Babies:** Thanksgiving for the birth of a child will be scheduled as needed. Please call the church office if your family would like to be included. Also, please call the church office after a birth so that a red rose can be placed on the altar in thanksgiving.

**Those being deployed:** Please call the church office so that we can offer special prayers at a service prior to your departure. Also, we 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 April 17, 2022. 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

February 2022

Kevin Beezhold, Nicole Bingay, Rhett Blythe and Family, Debbie Byers, Donny Davis, Paula Davis, Robert & JoAnn Feldman, Rachael Hofford, Ken Luehrs, Lori, Pat Moncure, Rebecca Poole, Arnie Schwartz, Scott Smith, O.D. Taylor, John & Pam Tompkins, Gayle Tompkins, Kenneth Tompkins, Tom Tremper, Patrick Weber, 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>



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



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## Some Observations about Adjustments in the Pandemic

**Y**ou know well how the pandemic has affected virtually everything—how many habits and routines have changed at work, at school, at shopping, and even at church. The media present their reports, health agencies and medical researchers share their data and their guidance, and various officials in government and elsewhere offer their perspectives. We try to adapt as needed to the flood of information and emotions. If we have learned anything during this situation, perhaps it is this: brace yourself for the next necessary adjustment.

I have observed some changes across the past two years. Some people are courageously coming to church more often than before—perhaps because they need the strength that comes from worshipping and communing with other Christians—whereas some other folks are attending church even less often than before. A few parishioners have kindly informed me about their medical conditions that require extra caution during the pandemic, such that they are strictly curtailing their going-out in public; but others might be slipping away from regular attendance due to shyness or laziness or a failure to appreciate what they are missing. This reality has been noticeable in our worship services and especially in our Sunday school ministry, where our Sunday school teachers are eager and ready and yet we do not have nearly the degree of participation from students and families who were involved just two years ago. My impression is that many students are still engaged in sports and that many families are still engaged in running errands, eating out, and traveling for vacations; so I don't quite understand the sad hesitation or the stubborn refusal about worshipping together and growing deeper in the faith.

Another area where our parish has certainly suffered during the pandemic is fellowship. The majority of Aquia leaders have thought it best for the time being to refrain from our usual ways of

serving scrumptious and ample breakfasts after our 7:30 morning services and of serving food and drinks at numerous receptions and meals. I surely miss those occasions, as do many of you. The ECW and other hosts have made gallant efforts to modify our food-serving practices, so as to reduce the chances of spreading coronavirus on our campus. Aquia's Table and Aquia's Pantry have made bold, consequential decisions for their own responses to the pandemic—even as they have exponentially increased their ministry—and the joy that these volunteers graciously share during their time together is evident. I hope that the next set of adjustments we can make will allow us to spend more time sitting down together, eating together, and catching up together, rather than becoming further isolated from each other and more coldly distant from our Lord.

Perhaps as our understandable concerns about the omicron variant subside and warmer weather works its way to our area, we might experience some higher attendance and renewed opportu-

nities for fellowship. We'll continue to assess recommendations for meals, food service, and group gatherings. I am grateful to those of you who have remained faithful in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God amidst the challenges of the pandemic, and I am intrigued for the potential that our increased use of electronic communications and other adaptations will have down the road. If you know of ways that we can make helpful adjustments in our ministries, so that they might be more meaningful to you and others around you, then please let me know. And if there is any encouragement I can offer or any criticism I need to hear that would encourage your renewed engagement in person here, then please tell me.

*Jay Morris*







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EPISCOPAL CHURCH

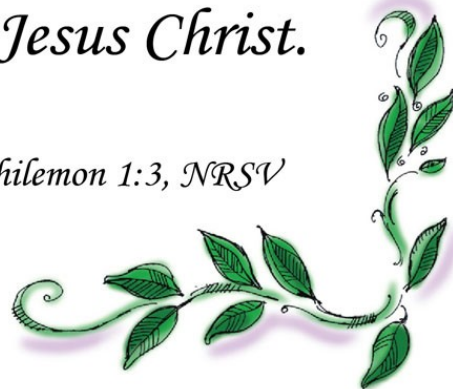
Aquia Episcopal Church  
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22555

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*Grace to you and peace  
from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Philemon 1:3, NRSV*



The November 2021 Reading Room reflected the fact that our then-current Morning Call series was exploring the Sermon on the Mount, which comprises chapters 5 through 7 of the Gospel according to Matthew. While that Sunday morning series ended in due course, some of its material has recently returned to my attention. As I mentioned in my regular column for the present issue of this newsletter, I am studying the Beatitudes with some other clergy friends—including Father James Rickenbaker and his predecessor here, the Reverend Connor Newlun (now rector of a parish in Maryland)—who together are enjoying the renewal and extension of our friendship around discussion of this biblical material. A noteworthy feature about the Beatitudes is that they are presented differently in Matthew’s Gospel (Matthew 5:3-12) and in Luke’s Gospel (Luke 6:20-26). For starters, Matthew’s Gospel offers a larger collection of statements about beatitude (or blessedness, or blessings that one can receive), whereas Luke’s Gospel offers a shorter collection of statements about beatitude that are accompanied by several statements of woe—words of warning or even curses, we might say—that are not found in Matthew’s version. An example: Matthew’s Gospel offers encouragement to God’s people who are persecuted and reviled and disparaged for how they suffer like prophets of the Old Testament suffered (Matthew 5:11-12), but Luke’s Gospel repeats that encouragement (Luke 6:22-23) while adding a stern warning against those who are praised by everyone in the way that false prophets of the past also received praise (Luke 6:26). The different treatments of the Beatitudes in these two Gospels seem to reflect the respective literary and theological emphases of each evangelist, and the Beatitudes appear to function in somewhat different ways in Matthew than they function in Luke. For another thing: when the same basic beatitude is given in both Matthew and Luke, the direction in which the respective beatitude is aimed can be quite different. The first example of this is how Matthew’s Jesus says that *the poor in spirit* are blessed (Matthew 5:3), while Luke’s Jesus says that *the poor* are blessed (Luke 6:20)—that is, the poor without further qualification or description. Surely there is a substantive difference between being economically or financially impoverished (as mentioned in Luke) and being spiritually impoverished (as mentioned in Matthew). There is a similar difference between being hungry *for food* (as in Luke 6:21a) and being hungry and thirsty *for righteousness* (as in Matthew 5:6). The intended reward for those who mourn in sorrow differ as well: in Matthew they will receive comfort (Matthew 5:4), while in Luke they will laugh (Luke 6:21b). The book that our group is using as the basis for our study and reflection might interest you, too: *The Beatitudes through the Ages* (Eerdmans, 2021) by Rebekah Eklund, who teaches Scripture, theology, and ethics at Loyola University Maryland, where she also serves as chairperson of the department of theology. Besides her doctorate, Eklund holds a master’s in divinity and has served full-time as a pastor for several years; her training and background in preaching and pastoral work have served her well in this volume. After a brief introduction and a pair of foundational chapters, Eklund’s last eight chapters set the stage for considering each of the particular beatitudes in detail. She draws attention to the discrepancies between Luke’s treatment and Matthew’s treatment of the Beatitudes and then explores with genuine curiosity what the Beatitudes have meant to various interpreters and thinkers across the centuries. Part of Eklund’s concern is to demonstrate how Christians have been inspired to read and to apply the Beatitudes in different ways, adapting the same biblical texts to different circumstances and different moments in history. Her depiction of the varied effects of interpretation indicates a perhaps surprising array of possibilities.

Going a bit beyond the Beatitudes to the bigger chunk of Matthew’s Gospel in which they appear, Charles Talbert’s book *The Sermon on the Mount: Character Formation and Decision Making in Matthew 5-7* (Baker Academic, 2006) covers precisely what its subtitle suggests. This book makes helpful connections between the Sermon on the Mount, on the one hand, and the rest of Scripture, the varieties of Judaism around the time of Jesus, and parallel passages in Greco-Roman writings on morality and ethics on the other hand, so that we can consider the Beatitudes and the rest of the Sermon on the Mount within their wider contexts. Talbert’s chapter 6 (titled “A Portrait of Disciples with Promises and Expectations”) is the portion of this book that focuses upon the Matthean Beatitudes, with the Lukan Beatitudes receiving very little attention here (simply because this book covers the broader topic of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew instead of the narrower topic of the Beatitudes). I mention Talbert’s book here and now, as I did for the November issue, but without knowing back then that his death would occur later in November and that his burial would occur last month after a long and distinguished career as a biblical scholar. So I pause to give praise and thanks to the Lord for Talbert’s considerable influence upon me. When I was a junior at Wake Forest, I took his graduate-level seminar on the Fourth Gospel and the Letters of John during the semester when he was completing his commentary on those biblical texts; and in that commentary he briefly cited research that I developed in my exegetical paper for that course. The next year I took his undergraduate survey of the New Testament, whereas most students would have attempted the survey before the more specialized work. Between these two classes, Talbert taught me how to read a passage of Scripture and how to make sense of the Bible as a whole, and my life has not been the same since. His influence upon my life and my ministry has been profound, and the good folks at Aquia have been the prime beneficiaries of his gift to me. Thanks be to God!