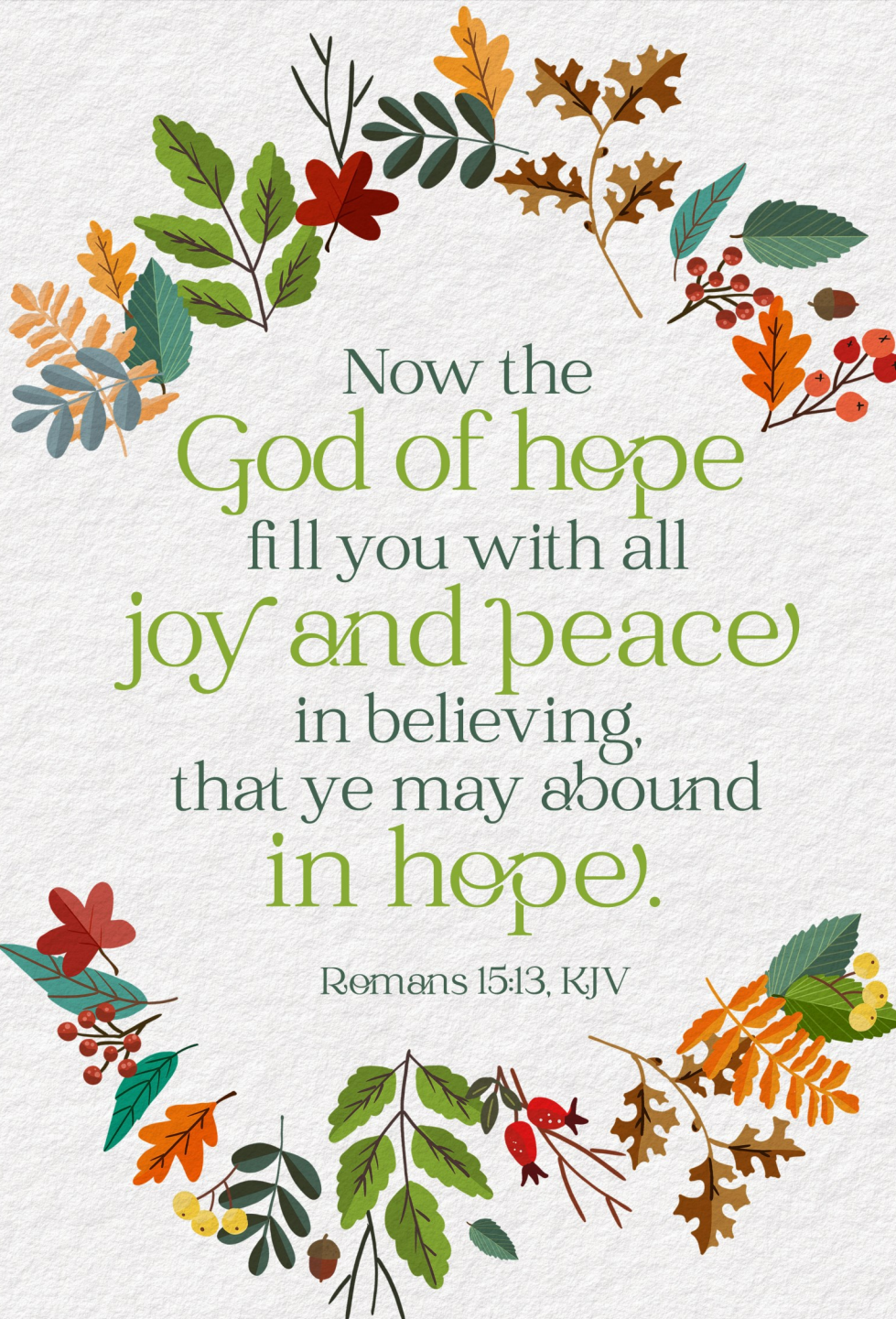




AQUIA
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

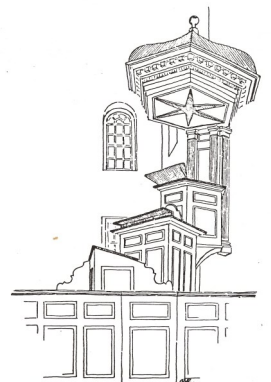
Cross Section

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



INSIDE:

- Reflections on Outreach
- Rest
- ECW Gearing Up for Fall Activities
- Sts. Mary & Martha Guild Invites You to Contribute for Fall Fest
- Aquia's Table Highlights Hunger Awareness Month
- Vestry Highlights
- Fall Fest Auction List Has Grown!
- Notes From the Parish Office
- Celebrate St. Michael and All Angels This Month





CROSS SECTION

Aquia Episcopal Church

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Stafford, Va.

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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
Kimberly Bamber

Parish Administrator
Sue Selz

Bookkeeper
Gloria Reyes

Nursery Supervisor
Dawna Spaulding

FROM THE RECTOR

Reflections on Outreach

The COVID-19 pandemic affected all of us in countless ways, with most of its impact being so obvious that it need not be rehearsed here. Yet a few changes are particularly noteworthy—including some notes that sound good while other notes do not sound quite as pleasing to the ear.

Consider how much need there has been for our food ministries since the pandemic began and even during its decline. Consider also the generous response that so many supporters have made for our efforts in food security. Aquia's Table and Aquia's Pantry were thriving long before the pandemic landed here: perhaps you can remember when we served meals to guests seated indoors and when guests went around the great hall and selected fresh produce and other groceries for themselves. But when the pandemic's arrival prompted us to operate under new restrictions for public health, volunteers in these ministries responded not only bravely and boldly but also graciously and generously by undertaking exponential expansion almost immediately. Despite the enormous expenses that these groups have incurred in recent years, we have not had to touch our reserve funds for Aquia's Table because so many parishioners and friends have given in-kind donations and financial contributions and because these groups have exercised excellent stewardship. The Lord's abundant provision of food, supplies, and labor for these ministries has been remarkable, and now Aquia's Pantry and Aquia's Table are our signature ministries for outreach to our neighbors in need.

Despite the pandemic-era success of our food ministries, we have unfortunately seen some decrease in our attention to other traditional avenues of outreach. Across the years, Aquia Church has typically taken the time and care to collect school supplies for children at the start of

a new school year. Parishioners have donated paper, pencils, pens, notebooks, rulers, scissors, and backpacks in order to share them with needy students nearby. But not this year: no one took the initiative to organize our customary collection of school supplies. What is perhaps more surprising is the fact that no one even asked me about this matter in the months before school bells sounded in August, nor in the weeks after the school year began.

I do not mention this omission merely to fuss nor to complain, but simply in order to remark very plainly that our parish missed one of our traditional opportunities to share with others what God has provided abundantly. This begs a larger question: are we ignoring other occasions for demonstrating God's grace to those who are less fortunate? Given what we have done in the past several years with outreach efforts through Aquia's Table and Aquia's Pantry alone—not including our fundraising efforts last year for war-torn Ukraine or this year for those devastated by wildfires in Maui or our youth group's annual Christmas shopping for students sponsored by Stafford Social Services—we have undertaken a lot of important outreach ministry in an array of situations, all for the good. Even so, I wonder what will happen around the upcoming holidays of Thanksgiving and Christmas (among other occasions) if we were to allow our traditional outreach ministries to suffer undue neglect.

In a newsletter article just over a year ago (August 2022), I wrote about our need for renewed involvement with our outreach ministry in general. Alas, that invitation still remains unanswered. So now I call once again for a few good-hearted folks to accept some role in discerning where our outreach ministry should go next and in leading us on that good path. If you have a heart ready to reach out to others with signs of God's love, please let me know that you want to help.

Jay Morris



FROM THE ASSISTANT RECTOR

Rest

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 willing you are to work for the spread of the Gospel. This is a wonderfully important aspect of Christian life. But on top of that responsibility for evangelism, we also have a responsibility to engage in intentional rest. Such a responsibility is not always as well appreciated, nor is it as intentionally enacted, as it should be.

The other day I read a quotation from Bill Gates that exemplified this cultural aversion to rest. Gates said this in an interview: "I have to try harder because sleep is laziness and unnecessary." Granted, I don't have the context for the quotation as I didn't listen to the entire interview, but the sentiment rings true to our cultural moment. So in this month of September, when we celebrate Labor Day—a day of rest from labor—I'd like to wax theological about just how important rest truly is.

Rest is one of the things that our society needs the most, but it is one of the things that we take the least amount of time to do. In theological terms, this is because we are all *opinio legis*. We are all 'of the opinion of the law,' defining ourselves by what we do. We think using an if/then theological outlook: If I just do this thing, then God will forgive/accept/love me. This attempts to exert a level of authority over God, perhaps without intending to do so. Not only that, but we struggle with what are referred to in ethical terms as competing goods. Church is good. Sports are good. But when sports are prioritized over church, we have a problem. The same is true for rest. Rest is mandated by God in Scripture. When sports, sleep, jobs, or even our family take us away from the rest that God has commanded for his people, that is a big problem. It shows not just where our priorities are, but also what other gods we have come to worship.

In Exodus 20:8-11a, God tells Israel: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all



your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day." In this fourth of the Ten Commandments, God enjoins Israel to rest on the Sabbath. Israel is to take a full day off from work. This is no arbitrary requirement for them. It is a stern reminder that God rules the universe, not us. Sabbath rest is for the purpose of reminding us that God provides for this world and rules it for our good.

Rest is subversive in our restless society. Taking a day completely off from work (Sunday for Christians) is of paramount importance. You are not defined by what you do, but by the love that God has for you in Christ Jesus. You are saved by grace, not works. Go to church, rest from your labors, and be reminded that God is in charge and you are not.

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

*In Christ,
Fr. James*



AQUIA CHURCH VESTRY

Chris Bowie

Administration Committee

Bob Brandon

Junior Warden

Building & Grounds Committee

Michael Golasz

Building & Grounds Committee

Dale Hendon

Finance Committee

Carolyn Hendrickson

Administration Committee

Bill Hoffman

Senior Warden

Sarah Kirby

Administration Committee

Walt Peterson

Administration Committee

Anna Rall

Register

Finance Committee

Lisa Schwartz

Administration Committee

Penny Stevens

Building & Grounds Committee



EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

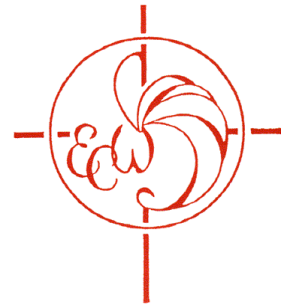
Can it be? September shows that our days are changing—whether it is daylight hours, flowers on the wane, summer activities slowing down, or fall plans beginning to take shape. If we were to look at a calendar for September 2022—just one year ago—many of the dates and notes in September would reflect other years past, but now we are ready to fill in our calendars for September 2023. With a little tweaking, we can work to add to our calendars or to change them, which in turn changes our lives. It can be with an additional prayer, calling a sister in Christ with joy in your heart, sending a card ‘just to say hello,’ or reflecting on God’s grace over a cup of tea or coffee. In all these acts and many others, you continue to make known the power of God’s love in your life and in the lives of those around you.

Traditions at Homecoming—to be held this year on Sunday, Sept. 10—include members and friends of Aquia coming home to worship, to share memories, and to enjoy a meal buffet-style following the 10:30 a.m. service. Along with some traditional dishes such as sweet tea, lemon tarts, fried chicken, and salads, you are invited to bring a covered dish to share. A signup sheet will be available on September 3 at the picnic table or in the great hall. It will have some ideas and recipes for dishes for you, and/or to help with set-up and breakdown. This time of visitation, communion, and renewal is indeed a celebration of Aquia!



66 YEARS, and looking better than ever: our volunteers are getting ready for our 66th annual Fall Fest. The gates will open at 8 a.m. on Oct. 7, and once again we will welcome everyone to our campus. We took notes at the close of last year and brought them out again when our planning for this year started months ago. All the familiar venues are back, and we continue to take care with current health and safety compliances. PJ the Clown is back and will entertain our children and adults. The live auction is in the capable hands of Shields Jones as always, and will start at 11 a.m. in the great hall. Our hand-rubbed pork will be available as sandwiches, one-pound packages to go, and whole butt pre-orders. There’s so much to see, do, and be a part of. A sign-up poster will be available each week beginning Sept. 4. Questions? Pick-up a trifold brochure or contact me by e-mail at bkwings_n_things@yahoo.com (or ask the church office for my phone number for voice/text).

Watch our Facebook page and share. Our department chairs have many great ideas, and we will continue to help you with gift ideas and great food. The flea market is back home in



the lower hall of the parish house with clothing. The book nook will be on the upper level, along with crafts and jewelry. Check out our furniture department near the man cave in the storage unit along the sidewalk. Check all the other departments out along the sidewalk, and visit the great hall to find PJ the Clown, the country store, our treasures department, the ECW table, the vestry sales of peanuts and related snacks, and food from the kitchen. Seating is always available in the great hall for the live auction! We have reserved a place for you.

We are accepting donations from everyone for the different departments. Our storage unit will arrive on campus shortly after Labor Day and be located in the same area as last year, near the exit driveway.

Briget Kane
ECW President



STS. MARY AND MARTHA

Worship, Service, and Fellowship

Fall in the air—Fall Fest 2023, that is! The ladies of the Sts. Mary and Martha Guild are getting everything together to provide the best craft room and jewelry room yet for all our Fall Fest guests! Our inventory has grown, and we can't wait to share it with you. You will be greeted in the craft room by darling sock monkeys, including the two sisters smiling here. There are fall decorations, Christmas ornaments and wreaths, beautiful bookmarks, wax angels, and more. In the jewelry room, you will find a colorful assortment of spools of ribbon as well as our treasure-filled jewelry tables and shelves.

During the month of September, the guild will meet every Thursday morning to finish our crafts and to plan what our shops will look like this year. We always welcome 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 room.
- 2) We also need gently used Christmas coffee mugs to put together 'snowman soup' kits.
- 3) We would appreciate a few samples of any craft that you make to add more variety to our inventory.
- 4) If you can help at the Fall Fest in either the craft or the jewelry rooms, please let us know or sign up on the volunteer poster found on the picnic table in front of the



These ladies will be delighted to see you on October 7 at Fall Fest!

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

All ladies of the parish are invited to join us. Come and enjoy the fellowship. 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 information, contact Mary Jane Cole (maryjane@cfs.w.biz) or Carolyn Hendrickson (cvhendrickson35@gmail.com), co-chairs of the Sts. Mary and Martha Guild.

Mary Jane Cole

AQUIA'S TABLE

September is National Hunger Awareness Month and Hunger Action Month—a month where people all over the United States stand together with the 'Feeding America' organization and the nationwide network of food banks to fight hunger. It's a month to spread the word and take action on the hunger crisis, and to dedicate ourselves to a solution. Members of Aquia's Table and Aquia's Pantry will wear an orange ribbon this month in support of ending hunger. We will have a



basket with these ribbons in the historic church and in the great hall. So please

grab a ribbon, pin it on, and wear it prominently in support of ending hunger!

The Table has been blessed this year with the continued help of SERVE, one of our community partners, and we are also supported by anonymous donations. We are currently preparing 400-450 meals weekly; our bakers bake 5 dozen to 10 dozen cookies or brownies one week each month, and our prep cooks bake 60 to 120 cookies to help with the additional meals we serve. Our menus are planned in advance and many times are determined by the donations we receive. Last-minute shopping is done by several members of our team who also pre-

pare and pack the meals, whether in brown bags or in take-out containers. We continue to serve our meals on a take-out basis and count the number of meals served. All these hands and hearts work to serve a nutritious, healthy, and tasty meal nearly every week of the year.

Aquia's Table continues to act and to dedicate our ministry toward an end to hunger.

*Briget Kane
Core Group*



VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

July 25, 2023, via Zoom

Business Session (starting at 7 p.m.)

Opening Prayer and Lord's Prayer

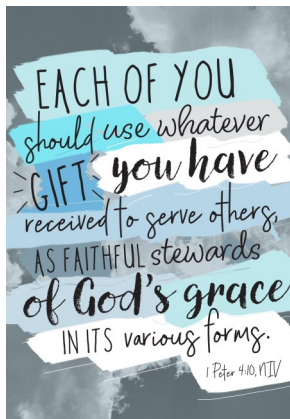
In Attendance: Fr. Jay Morris, Rector; Fr. James Rickenbaker, Assistant Rector; Chris Arey, Treasurer; Bill Hoffman, Senior Warden; Bob Brandon, Junior Warden; Christine Bowie, Michael Golasz, Dale Hendon, Carolyn Hendrickson, Sarah Kirby, Walt Peterson, Anna Rall, Penny Stevens

Treasurer's Report

- Security and Fire Protection expense will be reassigned to the correct expense line
- Reviewed budget-to-actual figures and statement of accounts
- Contributions toward matching challenge grant are low
 - ◇ At \$23K but need to meet \$100K in order to match the donation
 - ◇ Current deadline is 10/31/23

Minutes from Previous Meeting

- **R-2023-06: Election of Delegates and Alternate to Diocesan Annual Convention** (approved 6/27)
- Meeting minutes approved (Dale Hendon abstained from vote since not in attendance at June meeting)



New Business

- **R-2023-07: Authorization of Church Credit Card for Kim Bamber** (finance committee)
 - ◇ Approved unanimously
- **R-2023-08: Transfer Money from Vestry Reserve** (finance committee)
 - ◇ Approved unanimously
- **R-2023-09: Adjustments to 2023 Budget** (finance committee)
 - ◇ Approved unanimously
- Planning for a seafood feast on 08/26/23

Reports from Committees, Senior Warden, and Rector

Administration Committee:

- July meeting was held and each member gave an update on their individual goals and assignments for 2023

Finance Committee:

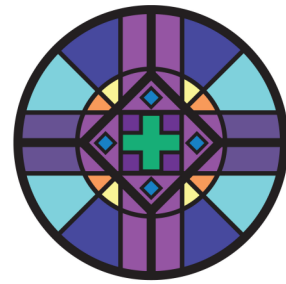
- Nothing additional to report as the three resolutions proposed today covered the topics from the committee's July meeting

B&G Committee:

- Three separate bids have been received for door-replacement project in 1960 parish house
 - ◇ Two unused double doors that will become windows
 - ◇ Two sets of double doors that are to be replaced
 - ◇ Single door that leads room at end of parish hall downstairs
- ◇ Funds are available for all three bids

Junior Warden Report:

- Calking of the windows in the historic church has been completed



Vestry Highlights

Senior Warden Report:

- A thank-you to vestry members who were able to assist with the parish picnic
 - ◇ Great attendance and was a great event
- Will send an electronic resolution for window and door replacement in parish hall since the mid-year adjustments have been approved for the 2023 budget

Rector Report:

- Bishop Dabney Smith will be in attendance on 10/22 for confirmation
- Planning additional fellowship events for the upcoming months

Upcoming Dates:

- 8/22 Vestry meeting (7 p.m. in person, with dinner available starting at 6:15 p.m.)
- 9/26 Vestry meeting (7 p.m. via Zoom)
- 10/7 Fall Fest (8 a.m.–2 p.m.)
- 10/22 Confirmation with Bishop Dabney Smith (10:30 a.m. worship service; perhaps meet with vestry for lunch??)
- 10/24 Vestry meeting (7 p.m. in person, with dinner available starting at 6:15 p.m.)

Good of the Order, Closing Prayer, and Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,
Anna Rall
Register



FALL FEST LIVE AUCTION – October 7 at 11 a.m.

How our list has grown! Can you help?



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

From Restaurants:

Outback Steakhouse: \$100 in gift cards

Zibibbo 73 Trattoria: \$25 gift card

Alpine Chef: \$30 gift certificate

Sake: \$25 gift certificate

El Gran Charro: \$25 gift card

For Golf Enthusiasts:

Gauntlet Golf Club: four VIP passes ([weekdays and after 1 p.m. weekends and holidays](#))

Forest Greens Golf Club: Foursome of complimentary greens fees (weekdays and after 1 p.m. weekends and holidays)

Aquia Harbour Golf Club: four 18-hole rounds of golf plus cart (weekdays only)

Another Great Escape:

Courtyard by Marriot Fredericksburg Historic District: one-night stay for two

For the To-Do List:

Publix Super Market: \$100 gift card

610 Car Wash: 5 Deluxe Wash tickets

Jabberwocky Children’s Books and Toys: \$10 gift certificate

Many of these and other items will be grouped together into single bid items.

Do you have something to offer: perhaps an antique or a better white elephant item, sporting event tickets, or an evening of childcare? Could you donate a few music lessons, cooking lessons, or hours of leaf raking? Just let Mary Jane Cole (maryjane@cfsbw.biz) or our auctioneer and fellow parishioner Shields Jones know what you can contribute. It is not too late to help make this our best Fall Fest yet!

Help us spread the news! Tell your friends and neighbors about our great list! Follow our group “Fall Fest at Aquia Church” on Facebook, and ‘like’ and ‘share’ our posts.

Here are four great ways to escape and relax found in the Fall Fest live auction:

**Hiker’s
Hideaway
Romantic
Cabin near
Shenando-
ah National
Park**



**The Essex
Inn in Tappa-
hannock,
Virginia —
Historic Bed
& Breakfast**



**Timeshare at the
Greensprings
Vacation Resort
in Williamsburg,
Virginia**



**Courtyard by Mar-
riot in Fredericks-
burg’s Historic
District**



FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

Burials: *“Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord; and let light perpetual shine upon them”* (BCP 486/502):

Ollie Tulloss, 2020-2022

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS AT AQUIA CHURCH

New Babies: Please call the church office after the birth or adoption of a child, so that a red rose can be placed on the altar in thanksgiving.

Those being deployed: Please call the church office before your deployment, so that we can offer special prayers at a worship service prior to your departure. Also, we would like to put your name 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. 5, 2023. 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 2023



Algernon John Baptiste and Family,
Rhett Blythe and family, Debbie
Byers, Baby Calahan, Laura Chiches-
ter, Richard Chichester, Paula Davis,
Robert & JoAnn Feldman, Michael Golasz,
Lori, Lori Hendon, Carolyn Hendrickson, How-
ard Family, Ken Luehrs, Mary Matthews, Pat
Moncure, Rebecca Poole, Ray Parsons, Arnie
Schwartz, Scott Smith, Dennis Springer, Nicole
Sundby, O.D. Taylor, John & Pam Tompkins,
Kenneth Tompkins, Warner Tompkins, Tom
Tremper, Bryce Vinson, Jen Wassmer, Walt &
Elizabeth Yager.

How to reach us:



www.aquiachurch.org
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(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.



St. Michael and All Angels

Many of us are familiar with the magnificent artwork which adorns the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican. The image of Adam almost touching the hand of God is one of the most widely known in Western art. The artist Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni, who actually preferred sculpture to painting, is also well known to us; indeed, we recognize him by his first name only—Michelangelo, meaning ‘Michael the Angel.’ However, we probably know less about the feast day of the Church that honors his namesake St. Michael and All Angels annually on September 29.

Secular culture has latched onto the term ‘angel’ for a variety of entertainment, commercial, sports, and promotional agendas. The English word ‘angel’ is a transliteration of the Greek word ἄγγελος (*angelos*) from the Hebrew *mal’akh*, which originally meant simply ‘messenger.’ For us, angels (as described in *An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church*) are:

Created spirits that are understood to be sent as messengers of God to human beings. Angels are spiritual beings of a different created order from humanity. They are “spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation” (Heb 1:14). Angels are pure spirits because they do not depend on bodiliness or matter for existence. Divine interaction with people is often heralded by angels in the Bible.

Angels are encountered throughout the Old and New Testament. As we found in Genesis, Abraham was met by three angels, an angel found Hagar in the desert, and Jacob dreamed of angels ascending and descending on a ladder from heaven and later wrestled with one. In Exodus 12 we hear of the angel of death and the Passover. In the New Testament, angels appear often: among other deeds, they minister to Jesus in the wilderness, they stand by the tomb at the resurrection, and (according to



the Book of Acts) they liberate the apostles from prison.

Some angels are named. In the Book of Daniel, we meet Michael (meaning ‘who is like God?’), a prince of angels, and the angel Gabriel (‘God is my strength’). In the New Testament, in Luke’s Gospel, we meet the angel Gabriel most prominently when he visits Mary and announces to Mary that she will bear Jesus. Michael reappears not only in the Book of Revelation (12:7-9), leading the angels in victory over the dragon (identified with Satan) and the dragon’s angels, but also in the Epistle of Jude, where he is identified as “archangel Michael.” In the Apocrypha there are two other named angels: Raphael (‘it is God who heals’) in the Books of Tobit and I Enoch, and Uriel (‘God is my light’), in the Book of 2 Esdras. (Fallen angels named in Scripture, such as Lucifer and Abaddon, are excluded from consideration in the present article.)

The prominence of Michael was magnified in early Christianity. In the 4th century AD, tradition accords that the emperor Constantine built the Michaelion, a magnificent sanctuary devoted to Michael, on the site of an earlier pagan temple that was sacred to healing. Constantine had waged war against his co-emperor Licinius and defeated him at the Battle of the Adrianople in A.D. 324, attributing his victory to St. Michael. Constantine cast Licinius as an

agent of Satan and as the serpent described in Rev 12:9. Hence, in iconography Michael was identified as the warrior-saint. In medieval Christianity, St. Michael and St. George were associated with chivalry. Michael later evolved as the patron saint of police officers, paramedics, and paratroopers.

The French 1st Parachute Chasseur Regiment first officially designed St. Michael as its patron saint in 1943 at the prompting of their chaplain, who identified his regiment with St. Michael, descending with angels from heaven to fight. This tradition has spread to other armed forces. At the U.S. Army Airborne School at Ft. Moore (previously named Ft. Benning) in Georgia, there was a small chapel. For a ‘leg’ prior to making their first jump, a prayer to St. Michael that he would protect the paratroopers would have been very fitting and not at all extraordinary.

September 29 is also known as Michaelmas, or ‘Michael’s Mass.’ A late 4th century basilica built in Rome to Michael was dedicated on September 30 (modern calendar), so the eve of that day has been recognized as Michaelmas. Michaelmas occurred nearly coincident with the autumnal equinox, and a variety of other calendar events became associated with this feast. Even today Michaelmas refers to the fall term at some British universities, notably Cambridge and Oxford, and is used to define one of the terms for the courts in England. In the United States, the Roman Catholic church celebrates a ‘Red Mass’ on the Sunday closest to Michaelmas for members of the legal profession. In our area, this is most notably held at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington, D.C., on the Sunday before the first Monday in October, the latter day being the start of the Supreme Court’s fall term. This service is often attended by Supreme Court justices, other judges, cabinet officials, and members of Congress.

Chris Arey





AQUIA
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Aquia Episcopal Church
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22555

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



While I spend very little time reading poetry, there are two exceptions that can attract my attention—good hymns and good church poetry—and both of these exceptions converge fruitfully in the work of George Herbert, the Welsh-born English orator, member of England’s Parliament for under two years, and Anglican priest for the three years prior to his death from tuberculosis in 1633 at the young age of 39. Perhaps you already know some of Herbert’s texts through *The Hymnal* 1982, such as “King of glory, King of peace” (#382), “Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life” (#487), “Teach me, my God and King” (#592), and “Let all the world in every corner sing” (though the music at #402 and #403 simply cannot compare to Ralph Vaughan Williams’s setting in his cantata *Five Mystical Songs*). Herbert is most famous for two compositions: his poetic work *The Temple* (first published posthumously in 1633) and his prose work *A Priest to the Temple* (better known as *The Country Parson: His Character and Rule of Holy Life* and first published posthumously in 1652). The latter work is a handbook of guidance for priests and pastors living in a largely rural locale, though much of the book’s content has been adopted or adapted by clergy in other settings as well. But the poetry of *The Temple* is my focus here. It is not a single poem of epic scope or length, but rather a compilation of poems that are arranged to reflect how one would enter a church building and engage in worship there, and more broadly to indicate how that approach may become a pattern for living in general. So the first poem of *The Temple* is “The Church-porch,” which serves as a place of transition from the everyday and ordinary world to the spiritual realm available inside. Soon one encounters “The Altar,” a poem whose words are arranged visually like a stone altar upon which an animal could be sacrificed. That poem leads next and naturally to “The Sacrifice,” in which Jesus leads the reader through the events, the people, and the emotions of Good Friday. Each of the two poems titled “Easter wings” have their phrases set in a layout shaped like the wings of angels; as with “The Altar,” the poems of “Easter wings” appear to resemble the realities they represent. Some of Herbert’s poems are brief and pithy, such as the aptly titled “Anagram”: “How well her name an *Army* doth present, / In whom the *Lord of hosts* did pitch his tent!” (in a poem about *Mary* the mother of Jesus). Others offer a narrative that astutely makes points about some doctrine, such as “Redemption” (which remains a wonderful illustration of that biblical concept). The entire collection of *The Temple* culminates most fittingly with “Love (III),” one of the most poignant and profound expressions about what happens in the Holy Eucharist that I have ever read or heard (again, listen to how Vaughan Williams renders this text in *Five Mystical Songs*).

Herbert does what great poets do: selects and arranges words in ways that crystallize a hundred thoughts into a few phrases, by whatever pattern of rhyme or meter or other presentation is conducive to focusing our attention and concentrating our memory upon the important thoughts being conveyed. *The Temple* is a clear case in which the value of the whole corpus is even greater than the bare sum of its parts. When a tiny sampling of his individual poems are included in an anthology (such as a volume of seventeenth-century British poetry or a book of religious verse), one loses the specific context within which Herbert had set that group of words and thoughts, just as one loses the ability to see the cumulative effect of the poems as a group. There are crucial themes that Herbert covers across several poems of the same title—including “Affliction” and “Love”—and the respective poems deserve to be compared with each other, instead of being considered only in isolation. Herbert is often classified together with John Donne (another remarkable Anglican priest and poet, who was Herbert’s godfather and with whom Herbert’s mother had a close connection) and other ‘metaphysical poets.’ When literary critics John Dryden and Samuel Johnson referred to them as metaphysical poets, the label was intended as a firm rebuke against their craftiness with words when that craftiness might have seemed too clever by half; and yet Herbert (like Donne) was always seeking to depict something deeper and higher than any mere word-plays could exemplify. Herbert’s work is always worth reading and re-reading patiently and carefully.

During the past two months, I participated in an online course about George Herbert, with two sessions discussing *The Country Parson*, followed by six meetings devoted to *The Temple*. Our textbook that I commend to you now was **George Herbert: The Complete English Works** (Alfred A. Knopf/Everyman’s Library, 4th ed., 1995), edited by Ann Pasternak Slater, in a handsome hardback with attached ribbon. (Different textbooks could have been assigned, including *George Herbert: The Country Parson, The Temple* [Classics of Western Spirituality/Paulist Press, 1981], edited by John N. Wall, Jr., and *George Herbert: The Complete Poetry* [Penguin, 2015], edited by John Drury and Victoria Moul, with Moul’s translations of Herbert’s Latin poems.) My understanding of Herbert’s life and work have been helped considerably by two additional books: the historical-literary biography ***Music at Midnight: The Life and Poetry of George Herbert*** (University of Chicago Press, 2014) by the Anglican priest and scholar John Drury, and ***Love Known: Theology and Experience in George Herbert’s Poetry*** (University of Chicago Press, 1983) by Richard Strier, now a professor emeritus of English at the University of Chicago.