



The APOSTLE

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church ... A Christian Community of open minds, open hearts, and open arms.

January 2021

I DIDN'T

really understand. I thought I did. But I actually didn't.

When the phrase Black Lives Matter burst into our hearing and sight with energy and presence, I thought it was absolutely right to put it on our Church signs. And so I did.

One day a Mom and her young child were on their daily walk past St B's. Her youngster saw the signs and looked at her and asked, "Does that mean that I don't matter?"

She called the church, shared with us her concerns and asked if we might change the signs to All Lives Matter.

Because I could feel her ache for her child – and because I do believe all lives matter, I changed the signs accordingly.

As people of faith, we surely ought to understand that all lives really do matter. God creates each and every human being in God's image. Therefore, without doubt or debate – all lives matter. Every life matters. I fundamentally and categorically believe this is true.

BUT I did not understand something really critical.

Since the shift of the signs, as I have watched, listened, prayed and shared conversation – I now understand something much deeper and more fundamental: until black lives really matter, then all lives cannot matter. It is stunningly that simple.

My life cannot matter as I would wish if there are lives that some of us say really do not matter – at least not as much as mine. I will always remain diminished. WE cannot all rise until the least, the last and the lost rise. Which means that I need to be

specific in my language and behavior to insure that the lives most at risk & who suffer the most from oppressive words and acts understand that I actually do understand better. Not perfectly – but better.

My life will matter even more when my non-European sisters and brothers lives matter just as much as mine. And I am willing to act accordingly.

I like to think that St B's is a place where we are learning such things at continually deeper and deeper levels. I hope I am right.

And it is the season of Epiphany in our church year. The season when Jesus (God-created-in-a-human-being) begins his ministry, calling together a faith community of varied disciples and setting out to show in his language and behavior that the way any person's life matters at the most fundamental faithful level is when we delight in the lives of all God's children.

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☞ I DIDN'T

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So, I am sorry I did not really understand. But I am grateful that some of you have patiently prodded me along. I hope I can do that for someone else. AND I hope we can continue to do that as a faith

community, learning from each other and being a beacon of what is possible when we turn to God to learn, care, act and thus rise – together!

— Flo Ledyard, Rector

☞ Worship

Zooming Together for Worship at St. B's

Please join us on Zoom each Sunday morning at 10:00 am. Here's how:

This is the link

<https://zoom.us/j/7641738777?pwd=d05KWmJPZ0ZZaHlmUlpRK2NiOFp6UT09>.

or you can go to your own Zoom page and use this info:

The Meeting ID: 764 173 8777

The password: 703085

or you can call in using this number: (646)558-8656.

AND, you can come as early as 9:00 am to have some fun at our Coffee Hour.

“Take Out @ St. B's”

On Saturday, January 9, from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm, we will once again be serving “Take Out @ St. B's.” If you would like to be able to have Eucharist during worship on January 10 and 24, please feel free to stop by the Church, and, at the red back door, someone will be there to greet you and give you the communion kits you need, as well as a piece of paper explaining how to care for them.

Offering envelopes (for those who have pledged) will also be available for pick up at this time.



“A Moment of Peace and Quiet”
A digital devotion available on our [website](#).



Many thanks to all those who help make our
Advent, Christmas and Epiphany celebrations happen:
for those who decorate the Church,
for those who serve during our worship services,
for those who invite someone to celebrate with us ...

Thank you!

Celebrate the Epiphany

*We will be celebrating
a Celtic Feast of the Epiphany (via Zoom)
on Wednesday, January 6
at 7:30 pm.*

*We are excited that musicians
Celeste and Andy Thurston will be joining us.*

An Episcopal Visitation

We are delighted to welcome The Right Reverend Robert Ihloff
as an Episcopal Visitor on Sunday, January 24.



In the Beginning God Said Light

Shared by Janet Aldrich

*Hmmmm, my soul is hovering amid darkness and Light these days. Last month's poem choice was "How Dark the Beginning;" this month I offer up this, by Mary Szybist, with its offering of Light **from** the Beginning. We're **all** wavering, I'm guessing, in and out of "theatrical lighting" with God, trying on different "endless combinations" of ourselves, aching to "really feel/how good it feels/to be still in" the world as we've generally known it, as God's accomplices. May our spines shine in 2021!*

In the Beginning God Said Light

and there was light.
Now God says, Give them a little theatrical lighting
and they're happy,
and we are. So many of us
dressing each morning, testing
endless combinations, becoming in our mirrors
more ourselves, imagining,
in an entrance, the ecstatic
weight of human eyes.
Now that the sun is sheering
toward us, what is left
but to let it close in
for our close-up? Let us really feel
how good it feels
to be still in it, making
every kind of self that can be
looked at. God, did you make us
to be your bright accomplices?
God, here are our shining spines.
Let there be no more dreams of being
more than a beginning.
Let it be
that to be is to be
backlit, and then to be only that light.

~~ Mary Szybist

Know Someone Who Likes to Sing?

by Ted Davis

While it's not the same as singing together, virtual choir practices have been one of the ways we at St. Bartholomew's have been working on innovating for pandemic times. In place of in-person choir rehearsals, we have been holding virtual practices on Thursday evenings. With a core group of four singers gathered in the church (masked and distanced), others singers are joining via Zoom from their homes. Virtual participants are muted, thus not heard by others, but hear the voices coming from those gathered in the church, thus creating the experience of singing with a community virtually.

This arrangement makes for a golden opportunity to try singing with us, without leaving your home (or even being heard)! Please contact our director (ted@stbs-md.org) or the church office to learn how to log in via Zoom. All are welcome. Rehearsals resume on Thursday, January 7.

— Ted is Organist and Choirmaster



Vestry Highlights

During this time of pandemic and quarantine, the Vestry decided to divide the monthly Vestry meeting into two meetings. Shorter meetings on Zoom are preferable than a longer meeting. The Vestry now normally meets on the third and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 6:30 pm.

At their meeting on November 17, 2020, the Vestry:

- Approved a motion to support Interfaith Partners of the Chesapeake pledge.
- Discussed recent plumbing repairs.
- Discussed status of PNC loan forgiveness and the budget deficit.

At their meeting on November 24, 2020, the Vestry:

- Supported the plan for telephone calls to parishioners.
- Each of the Task Force Committees developed next steps for their Committee during the Breakout session.

At their meeting on December 15 2020, (only one meeting this month,) the Vestry:

- Finalized plans for completing outreach telephone calls by December 31, 2020.
- Passed continuing budget and authorized signatory resolutions.
- Agreed to support a new interdenominational initiative, Baltimore City Council District Faith Based Hubs, including serving as the Hub for District 8.

The next set of regular meetings, scheduled on January 19 and 26, will take place via Zoom, both beginning at 6:30 pm.

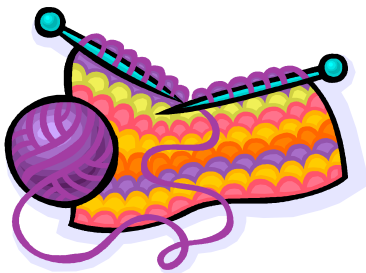
All Vestry meetings are open, and all members and friends are welcome to attend.

☞ Community Formation

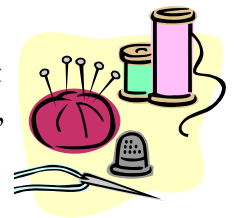
Prayer Shawls and Sewing Bees

by Jean Storrs

The Prayer Shawls craft shawls and prayer squares to give to parishioners and 40 West clients in need of comfort. The shawls are a tangible hug folks can keep with them all the time—a tangible reminder of our love and care for them, and God’s love and care for them. Knitters and crocheters of any age and ability are welcome.



St. B’s Sewing Bees gather for crafting and fellowship. Any sort of handwork is encouraged—knitting, quilting, cross-stitch, scrapbooking, etc.



The Prayer Shawls and Sewing Bees meet together via Zoom on the first Wednesday of the month from 7:00 to 9:00 pm.

For more information about the Prayer Shawls and St. B’s Sewing Bees, please contact Jean Storrs at 443-798-1439 or aandj@mindspring.com.



2021 Women's Retreat led by Katharine Armentrout and Flo Ledyard

Saturday, January 30 from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm

TIKKUN OLAM

The Hebrew phrase **tikkun olam** literally means to do something with the world that will not only fix any damage, but also improve upon it, preparing it to enter the ultimate state for which it was created.

Which implies that the world God created is in need of repair.

Hard to argue with that!

So what is in need of repair?

How would we know it was repaired?

What will it take from me/from us?

This year the Women's Retreat will wrestle with these questions and what tikkun olam means and requires of us.

All in one day on Zoom! Pretty awesome, I dare say. But also important and critical to us as people of faith in a pretty wonky world.

So put the day of January 30th, 2021 aside. Come and join Katharine Armentrout and Flo Ledyard from 9:30 in the morning until 3:30 in the afternoon as we grapple. It will be interesting, intriguing but also uplifting. Not a bad combo.

***In order to help plan for small group discussions, please let us know if you are coming!
You can email Maggie Caldwell at mcaldwell@stbs-md.org
and she will gather "THE LIST."***

And it is a great time to invite anyone else you think might enjoy this topic and conversation — cuz wherever they are, they can join as well!

In the meantime, we will send out a link as always.

— Flo

Prayer Matters

by *Glorius M. Sullivan*

I'm waiting for the snow — that white stuff we like to look at but not drive in. I've been to the store (with lots and lots and lots of other people) and bought bread, toilet paper, milk, snacks and cat food. I don't have a cat — but there is a stray neighborhood cat that frequents various homes on our street for meals and petting — and now I'm ready for the snow. I always especially like the first snow — it's like the real beginning of winter. It brings a sense of quiet to my soul, watching the falling snowflakes as they gather on the grass and sidewalks, making the outside world a fresh new white landscape untouched, at least for a little while. It brings me a sense of joy and peace, as I take the time to stop and watch, to just be still and enjoy the beauty. I like to see the snow falling in the evening, through the light from the lamppost and see it dressing the tree branches in white finery, creating a picture only nature can make. I think about how it is said that no two snowflakes are alike, thinking of their individual shapes and sizes and what a gift of beauty that I am seeing... and that makes me think about the varied and various people in my life.

We have all been blessed with our families and friends, even in this time of COVID-19, when we can see them on Zoom, or talk to them on the phone, or talk with them from a safe distance of 6 feet with masked faces. And with the promise of the new vaccines, we all hope to soon be able to gather together again and catch up on all the hugs and kisses we've missed! Having family and friends in our lives is a gift — one that we don't always think about or recognize at the time. I do believe that each person we meet and share a moment with, be it in words, or gestures, or actions, or simply a smile, makes a difference in our lives and in their lives as well. Each encounter leaves us moved in different ways, and I try to take time to think about how each person has enriched my life, and how I have hopefully impacted their life — praying for them and looking for Christ in each and every one.

As Daughters of the King, we hold in daily prayer those whose needs are known to us, our families and friends, our parish family, for those who have passed into life eternal and their families, folks we've never met who are dealing with COVID-19 virus or its effects, folks dealing with personal or medical issues, those in authority, and we know that prayer makes a difference in our lives and in the lives of those for whom we pray. It's what we do and why we do it.

The new year of 2021 is fast approaching, and with it comes the bright promise of vaccines to help against COVID-19 and the hope of being together, really together, again. Today, I offer prayers of Thanksgiving and Blessings —

For the Gift of Jesus Christ – The Gift and the Promise – and a reminder to myself to always honor that gift in my life,

For the People in my life – family and friends and others I meet whose name I may not know and a reminder to myself to look for Christ in all people,

For the Beauty of this Earth and a reminder to myself to take the time to stop and look for the beauty in all of God's creation and appreciate that gift, and

For the Blessing of God's presence and the sense of joy and peace in my life, and a reminder that each day is an opportunity to serve Him.

I continue to offer daily Prayer - but not because a New Year is coming and New Year Resolutions are often made and not because we Daughters have a Rule of Prayer and a Rule of Service. I offer prayer because it is my response to God in my life. Prayer matters – now and always – for all of us.

— *Glorius is President of the Margaret Rollo Chapter of the Daughters of the King*

Prayer Matters *(continued)*

(Continued from page 8)

The Motto of the Order of the Daughters of the King

For His Sake

I am but one, but I am one.

I cannot do everything, but I can do something.

What I can do, I ought to do.

What I ought to do, by the grace of God I will do.

Lord, what will you have me do?



Christian Formation 

Zoom Noon Bible Study—The Psalms

Starting on January 5th, the Rev. Thelma Smullen and Chuck Sullivan will begin a 6-week Tuesday Bible study class on the psalms. The meetings will take place beginning 11:45 am and end at 1:00 pm.

The Book of Psalms, often called the 'hymn book of the Bible,' is the only book of the Bible that is used at almost every service of our church. It is within this book that one can find the highest praise of God and the deepest despair of the human heart. These psalms call the community together as well as allow the individual to hold a direct conversation with our God. The language and the poetry are among the most beautiful and the most expressive part of our liturgy.

Please join us in what we hope to be a deeper understanding of this most vital part of our Bible and our worship.

If you want to join us, please email Chuck at chgl@verizon.net and/or Thelma at tasmullen@gmail.com. We would like to hear from you by the end of December.



Halfway There

by Kathleen Schotto

“Woah-oh.....We’re halfway there...” Many people will recognize these words as the first part of the refrain from Bon Jovi’s 1986 hit “Livin’ on a Prayer.” This song has been playing in my head on repeat recently. Partially because I was a high school senior when it was on the charts so it means a lot to me but really because I am exactly “halfway there.” I am currently a “Middler” (yes, that is a real word) at Virginia Theological Seminary in the second of three years. Additionally, I have just finished the third of six semesters of study for my Master in Divinity degree – the next step toward ordination to the diaconate and then to the priesthood. I am, officially, halfway there.

It has been a wild ride these two years since I stood in the aisle of St. Bartholomew’s Church receiving a blessing from the community. I had been with you for five months as an intern while I discerned a call to ordained ministry. During that time I preached, participated in outreach, got to know all of you, directed the Christmas Pageant and grew in so many ways including in the knowledge of my call; a call that was confirmed for me during my time at St. B’s.

It is a bit astonishing to find myself at this halfway mark; To know that in about a year, God willing and the people consenting, I will be ordained a deacon. I have learned so much in these three semesters of seminary and found that there is still much to learn. I have taken classes in Greek, New and Old Testament Interpretation, Preaching, History of the Episcopal Church, and Anglican

Thought. I have participated in worship that has been online and in person, traditional with lots of incense and bowing, non-traditional and unstructured, prayer and praise, morning prayer, evening prayer and compline. I have been the seminarian at St. Martin’s-in-the-Field for the last few months and will continue with them through my time in seminary. From that community I am receiving hands-on experience and training in worship, parish life, and ministry – not unlike what I experienced at St. Bartholomew’s.

I am becoming a stronger, more resilient, more confident leader who is more certain every day of her call to serve God and the church. I am grateful that after some turmoil for my family, St. Bartholomew’s was willing to take me on and take me in as “your” postulant and welcomed my family as well. It is a privilege to call St. B’s my home. I feel your prayers with me and they are a part of what hold me up and help me grow on a daily basis.

Thank you for these words Bon Jovi – they are so very true for me. Thank you St. Bartholomew’s for your love, welcome, and prayers. “Woah-oh.....We’re halfway there. Woah-oh...Livin’ on a prayer. Take my hand and we’ll make it I swear, Woah-oh....livin’ on a prayer.”

— *Kathleen is a member of St. Bartholomew’s and a Middler Seminarian at VTS*

Welcome Steven Smith!

by Neva Brown and Steven Smith

On January 1, 2021, Steven Smith begins his Congregational Internship for Deacon Formation with us at St. B's. Steven's time with us will be unique as we are worshipping and meeting primarily in a virtual environment. With limitations on in person engagement with Steven during his time at St. B's, Steven shares his spiritual journey with us.

Steven Smith's Spiritual Journey

My call to the diaconate began almost 10 years ago but I was hesitant to serve because I wanted to serve my own church community and I was not ready to leave my home church community at St. Mary's. In 1984 my spiritual journey in the Episcopal Church began at the age of twelve when I was brought to St. Mary the Virgin Walbrook in Baltimore, MD, by my grandmother, the late, great Mrs. Alma B. Smith, a member for over 75 years until her death in 2008. While I was living with my aunt, who worshiped at Apostolic and holiness churches, with my Catholic background, my grandmother suggested to my aunt that she let me attend St. Mary's and then my journey began. Almost immediately after my arrival to St. Mary's I was intrigued by becoming an acolyte. Encouraged by my grandmother, shortly thereafter I became an acolyte. As an acolyte I remember being nervous and not knowing what to do and not wanting to mess up, but with help from the elder and senior acolytes I became a professional altar boy. Being an acolyte gave me a purpose at St. Mary's. Looking forward to Sunday at St. Mary's gave me joy seeing the smile on my grandmother's face when I donned my robe and cotta. I rarely missed a Sunday. My confirmation at St. Mary's was in 1986. Continuing to serve on the altar, which I took very seriously, made me feel like I was closer to God. I didn't play around while serving on the altar because in my eyes you don't play around with God and you serve him at all times. Even when we fall short, his grace and mercy endure forever.

I credit coming to St. Mary's with saving my life because I was a pre-teen growing in up Baltimore, just trying to find my purpose in life. My grandmother was

the vessel that the Lord used to bring me to church, and I am forever grateful for her. At the age of fifteen, I received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. During my teen years I experienced some rough times, feeling like my life was heading in the wrong direction, and I turned to God to help me. Taking one day at a time with God on my side has gotten me to where I am today and that is a good God-fearing man — my life's motto.

After graduating from high school in 1990 I entered the U.S. Air Force in 1991 where I spent 21 years before my retirement in 2012. During my first 5 years in the Air Force my duty assignments took me away from St. Mary's and I had to adjust to life at other churches. Returning to Maryland in 1996, I was able to worship at St. Mary's on Sundays. From a young age my faith in God has never wavered, even after the death of both of my parents, close aunt, sister, both my grandmothers, and many other relatives, because God was with me through all of it.

Currently I work for the U.S. government as a cyber security analyst at Fort Meade. Married to the love of my life Carleah, two sons Christopher and Steven. Some of the proudest and blessed moments of my life were having both of my sons and grandson baptized at St. Mary's. Working my way up from acolyte to senior acolyte, I've not only have had the opportunity to assist my priest and mentor Fr. Charles Mercer, I have also mentored younger acolytes. In addition to being senior acolyte, I also served on the Vestry for over 12 years and I helped to organize the first men's group and annual men's day. Listening and opening my heart up to my call after reflecting on my spiritual journey and my 10 years of hesitation, I am ready for the call to serve God and the people of God, and I am ready to serve where God wants me to serve. I am looking forward to my internship at St. Bartholomew's. Thank you for the opportunity.

— Neva is St. B's Deacon;
Steven will be a Intern at St. B's



St. B's D-Group, for those in grades 6—12, meets via Zoom on Sundays from 5:00 to 6:30 pm. We're taking a break for Christmas, but we'll be back on Sunday, January 3!

Please contact Youth Group Leaders Kathie or Marty Clark (peaceclark1@gmail.com) for the link to join. Gather for fun, fellowship, and faith. Invite a friend!



**St B's Youth & families join
in on Creation Caretakers
trash pick up days!**



Adult Learning Possibilities

by Flo Ledyard

Pretty sure God does not want us to be stagnant in our faith development.

Imagine if we never read another newspaper, periodical, or book. Imagine if we never watched a documentary or listened to a podcast. Pretty sure we would be less informed about the world, our vocations, or jobs. So I bet you do read, listen and continue to learn.

Just suggesting that you might want to consider doing that about your faith and our role as Christians, too.

So here are some possibilities for your edification:

Faith Forum is an opportunity for older youth and adults to learn about topic-based stuff. During January, we are offering two different sessions on Sunday morning beginning at 9:00 am.

Baptismal Covenant, A Divided Nation, and the Role of the Church/Us

On the second Sunday in January, we mark and celebrate the Baptism of Jesus. And, as we do on all the days when baptism happens at St B's, we will recite the Baptismal Covenant to remind us of what is expected of us as people of faith.

Our nation is deeply divided right now. So what does that mean and what are we called to be and do as baptized Christians?

On **January 3rd**, **Bishop Bob Ihloff** will lead this conversation — made even more fascinating with his church-wide experience and perspective.

Christian Unity: Pros and Cons

Also during January, a Week of Prayer for Christian Unity takes place. An interesting idea — especially for Episcopalians who are a reformed denomination. What would Christian Unity look like? What would be the blessings of that — or the cons?

On **January 24th**, **Michael Soderstrand** will lead this conversation. Michael has a wonderful group of men that he meets with regularly representing many different Christian perspectives. So he will no doubt bring some intriguing ideas to share.

A Lenten Offering is back for 2021.

On Wednesday evenings during Lent, we will offer the first series of a new curriculum called Christianity and Racism. 5 different perspectives will be offered. So just a heads up. It will begin on February 24th.

— Flo is St. B's Rector

Epiphany 2021

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” —John 1:14

by *Cynthia Wagner*

The word ‘epiphany’ in the secular world means, in my teacher language, the “AH HA” moment—when a student who has struggled with a concept makes the connection. It is a satisfying and rewarding moment to observe (or since we went virtual, hear).

In the religious world, ‘Epiphany’ means the moment when the Divine nature of who Jesus was became evident to the Magi. This moment to me is soul-nourishing and it is a spiritual awakening that encourages me to reflect on what does the Divine nature of Jesus mean to me and how can I help reveal the Divineness of Jesus’ nature to the world.

2020 was a tough year for so many reasons, but because of my different communities, I know that God is, indeed, dwelling among us. The St. B’s community has been a faithful reminder of God in the world. We continued to worship, offer our facilities to others, provide food, have the Flea Market, meet in some groups for spiritual reflection, and as always, formally and informally, reach out to each other in meaningful ways. The lights at St. B’s have stayed on and as a result, so has my little light and hopefully yours, too.

This has been possible because we have people who have had the “Epiphany” and know that Jesus is Divine, dwells among and have responded with spreading that Divinity—whether it be through the time and talents of many of our members and/or the financial pledges St. B’s has received from members and non-members. To date, for the 2021 budget, we have received 85 pledges, totaling \$354,474.

During December, every member of St. B’s will be getting — or will have received — a call from a member of Stewardship or the Vestry. We decided that it was one more way we can remain a bit more connected as a community and just “check-in” with each other.

Let’s continue to realize the Divine in Jesus and take comfort in the fact that the Divine dwells in each of us and make it our goal of 2021 to spread that Good News to others.

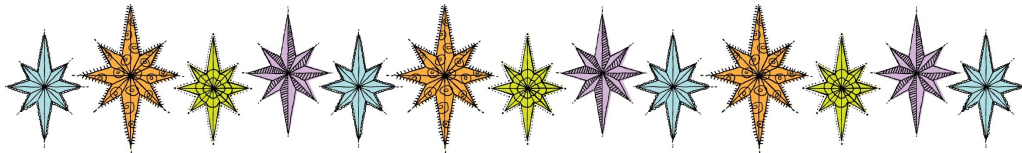
— *Cynthia is Chair of the Stewardship Committee*

News from Creation Caretakers

by Leah Kulp

1. We are a new pledging congregation in the Interfaith Partners of the Chesapeake! On November 17, 2020 Vestry members voted for Warden Angel Jackson to sign the pledge on the parish's behalf. As an IPC partner, we pledge to care for God's creation, serve as stewards for the land and waters of the Chesapeake, and sustain the life and health of all creatures. As St. B's green team, Creation Caretakers will help guide the parish in enacting this pledge. See the complete pledge on page 17.
2. On November 21, 2020 from 10 am to noon we held our first Litter Cleanup Event. Twenty volunteers from St. B's, 40 West Assistance and Referral Center volunteers, and the youth from St. Agnes and St. William of York Churches patrolled Edmondson Avenue/Baltimore National Pike from St. Agnes Church to Edmondson Village, along with Uplands Parkway along the woods. We wore masks and brought our own gardening gloves. Trash bags, collection buckets, a few reflective vests, and grabbers were provided. We did our civic deed while wearing masks, socially distancing, and getting outdoor exercise. It was a great opportunity to meet new people and have fun!
3. Our next Litter Cleanup Event is planned for January 16, 2021, from 10 am to noon, weather permitting. Going forward, we hope to make picking up litter a monthly event to be held on the third Saturday morning of every month.

— Leah is Chair of the Creation Caretakers



Financial Position as of November 30, 2020

— Financial information is provided by John Schroeder, Treasurer

November 30, 2020	Current Month	Current Month	Year to Date	Year to Date
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Total Income	45,360.00	47,066.67	507,605.74	517,733.33
Total Expenses	<u>(36,706.24)</u>	<u>(51,101.20)</u>	<u>(516,693.91)</u>	<u>(562,113.26)</u>
Difference	8,653.76	(4,034.53)	(9,088.17)	(44,379.93)



Partner Congregation Pledge

As a community of faith, we are called to honor our sacred bond with our Creator, serve as good stewards of the land and waters of the Chesapeake, and sustain the life and health of all creatures.

Through our words and actions, we pledge to:

- Celebrate, respect, and revere the Earth's blessings
- Demonstrate good stewardship in how we manage our land and facilities
- Engage members of our community in the work of caring for the environment.
- Embrace the mission of Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake to work together to protect and restore our shared watershed

Rooted in faith and hope, we will:

1. Take actions to
 - a. educate ourselves on ways to live in harmony with the Earth and teach our congregations to be faithful stewards of the Earth and thus magnify our impact,
 - b. reduce our impact on the Earth at our facilities and within our institution,
 - c. restore our watershed through cleanups, reducing pollution, and restoration,
 - d. promote local, state, and federal policies that protect natural resources for generations to come.
2. Reinforce our commitment as part of our liturgical calendar.
3. Cultivate leaders among our members who will champion watershed stewardship.
4. Use our financial, volunteer, and other resources to help in this work to restore the Earth.
5. Build connections with our broader community and share the message of restoration and respect of the Earth beyond our congregation.
6. Advocate for all communities to have access to a healthy environment.
7. Display this pledge so community members and visitors are inspired to take action.

We do all of this with gratitude for the creation which sustains all life. May we be guided by grace and compassion so that our actions may restore the beauty and balance of the Chesapeake Bay watershed – and all the Earth. May our efforts give inspiration to others, calling them toward a path of respect and reverence for all God's creation.

We are an Interfaith Partner for the Chesapeake.

Signature _____ Date _____

Name of Congregation _____

Outreach News

by Kim Flash

In these challenging times, St. B's Outreach Committee remains committed to supporting our neighbors along the 40 West corridor and beyond.

MANY THANKS to the many people who donated gift cards as part of our unique "Angel Tree" during the season of Advent. A whoppin' **233 gift cards** were donated!! Many, if not most, of these came from St. B's parishioners, though we had the additional help of parishioners of neighborhood churches and neighborhood residents. Due to the great generosity of so many people, those who utilize 40 West and our Hope Harbor partner families were able to purchase gifts for their children, as well as other necessary items. We are always amazed and gladdened by our parish's ability to step up when there is a need. Thank you!

MLK Day of Service — and Raffle!

As many know, St. B's has traditionally dedicated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day as a day of service, sponsoring an enormous food drive to fill the pantry shelves of 40 West. Those pantry shelves need filling more than ever, as the pandemic brings economic hardship to so many. But the pandemic also dictates that we do things a little differently this year.

Instead of collecting food in the neighborhoods around St. B's to support the mission of 40 West, we are asking parishioners and neighbors to recognize the legacy of Dr. King by giving a financial contribution to 40 West. Funds will be used to purchase food from the Maryland Food Bank at their bulk pricing rate.

To make it interesting and fun, we are turning this into a RAFFLE! For every \$5.00 donated, a "ticket" will be entered for the donor's name into the raffle. If, for example, you donate \$15.00, your name will be entered into the raffle three times.

Prizes include:

- A small collection of David Winter cottages
- A "gardening basket" with items to get a gardener's creative juices flowing
- An "Orioles basket" for your favorite fan
- Autographed "Bon Appetit" cookbooks
- AND MORE

Donations will be accepted through the month of January. The raffle will be in early February.

Watch your "What's Happening" for more information on this exciting opportunity!

— Kim is Co-Chair of the Outreach Committee

2021: A Prayer for a Year of Recovery

Offered by Peggy McMillan

As 40 West starts a new year, I can think of nothing better than a prayer to set the tone and our awareness in 2021.

Dear God,

May 2021 be a year of recovery.

With vaccines taken, may we recover the handshakes and hugs we took for granted prior to Covid-19. With the demise of this pandemic, may in-person gatherings replace virtual gatherings, and “distance” refer to mileage rather than the anxiety-filled space between two human beings avoiding contagion.

When it is safe, God, may we take off our masks and see each other’s smiles of recognition and love. Help us to continue to be grateful for the little things we noticed when we were forced to slow down in 2020.

Dear God, may this be a year of recognition that it is these very same little things in life that truly matter: kindness, warmth, affection, generosity, and love.

May we soon be able to extend these to each other, without masks or distance, and feel again the warmth of the human Spirit, of Your Spirit, and of our humanity.

Amen.

*— Peggy is the Director of the 40 West
Assistance and Referral Center*



**Tired of being in the house?
Want to interact with others?
Join Hope Harbor and have fun playing Bingo virtually**

**Saturday January 23, 2020
2:00 PM to 3:30 PM**

**Tickets are \$20.00 (plus processing fee) for one card
Additional cards are \$10.00 apiece**

**Purchase tickets at Eventbrite through this link:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/virtual-bingo-tickets-133794080697>**

Blazing Beacon Moment

We have an awesome Vision Statement. We say it on Sundays to remind ourselves and God that we get it.

We will, with God's help, be a vibrant faith community that is a blazing beacon of God's transforming love.

Might be easy to think that it is not very pertinent right now during this time of separation. Not so. In fact, our vision for us is just as important as it has ever been. AND there are stories abounding of blazing beacon moments. So let's share them in this section of *The Apostle*.

I invite you to email Maggie (mcaldwell@stbs-md.org) with another one that we can share next month. Come on, everyone. Let's celebrate abounding Blazing Beacon moments.

— Flo Ledyard, Rector

St. Bartholomew's Supporting Our Neighbors

by Bonnie Kutch

St. Bartholomew's Sewing Bee's and Prayer Shawl Groups have made a third donation of yarn to the Catonsville Senior Center Linus Project. St. B's received a large donation of yarn in December. A portion of that was shared with the Linus Project, part of a national non-profit network that donates blankets to children at hospitals.

Last August, the Catonsville Senior Center put out a call for donations of yarn to support their members who, due to the COVID shut down, could not gather at the Senior Center, but were continuing to work at home knitting and crocheting. The group makes blankets, scarves, stuffed toys, baby hats, and shawls to donate to St. Agnes Hospital, where they are disinfected and stored for use with patients. They also make prayer shawls, which are distributed to several churches in the area, where they are blessed and distributed to those in need.

Thanks to generous donations to St. B's, several large bags of yarn were donated to the Catonsville Senior Center last August, October, and again in December. The Senior Center members have expressed gratitude for our support — as you can imagine, having access to supplies during the pandemic has allowed them to continue their handcraft and continue to be of service at a time when there is so much need across our community.

Just another example of St. B's living up to its mission and striving to be a "Blazing Beacon" of God's transforming Love in the world.



Blazing Beacon Moment

“And the People Stayed Home”

History repeats itself. Came across this poem written in 1869, reprinted during 1919 Pandemic.

This is Timeless....

And people stayed at home
And read books
And listened
And they rested
And did exercises
And made art and played
And learned new ways of being
And stopped and listened
More deeply
Someone meditated, someone prayed
Someone met their shadow
And people began to think differently
And people healed.
And in the absence of people who
Lived in ignorant ways
Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
The earth also began to heal
And when the danger ended and
People found themselves
They grieved for the dead
And made new choices
And dreamed of new visions
And created new ways of living
And completely healed the earth
Just as they were healed.



by Neva W. Brown

When I received this poem in a group text it appeared as you see it on this page. Reading it and thinking about what we are doing now, while staying home, with the picture next to the poem it appeared Timeless. However, prompted by a message that Facebook denied the claim, I did the research. The poem was written in 2020 by Kitty O’Meara, not in 1869; however, let me imagine the possibility. The poem even got the attention of Oprah and many other celebrities. Well, it got my attention and that of many who need hope. In an article from the Washington Post, the poem is referenced as becoming a “communal beacon of hope.” It has stirred us up to stop, reflect on what is happening in our world today, and the possibility history will and does repeat itself. As you read it, if it is the first time, pause and reflect on how you have spent most of 2020 and the hope for 2021 and the years to come.

You might even think about reaching out to someone as we remember as we go forth in the world, “We will with God’s help, be a vibrant faith community that is blazing beacon of God’s transforming love in the world.”

— Neva is St. B’s Deacon

*Your prayers are requested for
members and friends of St. B's ...*



Lucy Marshall; Doris Haughey; Vince Marsiglia; Donna Cartwright; Janet Churchill; Shirley Nathan Pulliam; Wyvetta Dupree; Tony Creek; Mike Knudsen; Lillian Thomas; Celia Vismale; Ray Zeigler; Larry Brown; Sandra DeSilva; Peter Griffin; Jon Davis; Young Sam; Michelle Haynie Madison; Kate Henshall; Mary Warfield; Ayodele House; Tom Cover; Jim Wright; Kathleen DeVale; David McClellan; Larry Bucher; John White; Steve Sprecher; Chris Bassett-Jellema; Jean Black; Michele Pearson; Genevieve Barrow Gongar; Don Blackert; Melody Pitts; 40 West Assistance and Referral Center Clients; Hope Harbor partner families; Heidi; Theresa Thomas; Meg and Shaun; Kathy and Andy; Don and Angel; John and Jean; Sue Goodall; Amanda Ash Freeland; Kyle Yoder; Van Gardner; Scott Armentrout; John Mountain; Patricia Mountain; Diane McPhillips; Ron Blouin; Mary Warren; Michael Pizarro; Robin Kaspar; Jerome Gray; Patricia Martin; Rick M.; Priscilla W.; Carlson T.; Clay Shiflet; David Liscinsky; Joyce Stanley; parents of Kevin Markle; Ann and Van Wolf; 65-year-old John; Jill Sandford; those affected by the coronavirus; those in our midst who are un- or under-employed & the homeless; AND any others we name at this time.

**NewsLetter
DEADLINE**

**The deadline for the February issue of
The Apostle is Friday, January 15.**

Please e-mail articles to mcaldwell@stbs-md.org.

To submit typewritten or handwritten material, place it in Maggie Caldwell's mailbox outside of the Church Office. All articles must include a contact name and email or phone number. Publication of *The Apostle* is on the last Sunday of the month.



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Baltimore, Maryland 21229-1440

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**During this complicated time, we worship on Sunday mornings at
10:00 am via Zoom.**

Please visit our website to learn how you can join us!

For more information about our worship or programs, please contact us at **410-945-7263**
or office@stbs-md.org or visit www.stbs-md.org.
