



The Herald

St. Raphael the Archangel Episcopal Church

Vol 54 Issue 9

September 2019

The end of summer is with us! All the seasons have their fun and goodness, and the colors and cooler weather are something to look forward to this Fall. At St Raphael's, we shall be celebrating the 'Seasons of Creation' during September, looking at oceans, fauna and flora, storms, and the cosmos leading up to a shared compline service for our saints' day with St Michael's on Sept 29 followed by St Francis' Day and the blessing of the animals on October 6.

This 'Season of Creation' is an opportunity, shared with the global church, to focus our prayer and worship on the environment, the beauty and our interdependence with all God's world. Of course, this appreciation of creation is not new to our time, though the environmental need for healing has a new urgency today with almost daily news of fires, floods and 'natural' disasters. St Francis composed 'The Cantic of the Sun' based on Psalm 148 in 1224 to affirm his personal theology of the communion of all creation as brothers and sisters with all humanity, reject material accumulation and comforts in favor of "Lady Poverty", and know home as everywhere and anywhere. May it speak to us too of our relationship to the world!

Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially through my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day; and you give light through him.

And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendor! Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars, in heaven you formed them clear and precious and beautiful.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind, and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather through which You give sustenance to Your creatures.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom you light the night and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth, who sustains us and governs us and who produces varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.



Rev. Canon Dr. Helen
Van Koevering

Sr Warden's Corner

If you have read many of my articles (and I have recently learned that some of you do, which I had totally not counted on, so... sorry) you will probably notice that I tend to get fixated on certain words or phrases. This month, "Welcome Regardless" has been my fixation. What do we mean by this in practice?



Tony Lo Bianco

Starting with the simple and easy version, I think that we mean this: This is a safe place for you to come, and we would love to have you here. There are no prerequisites – rich, poor, white, black, Hispanic, other, gay, straight, abled or disabled, conservative or liberal, old, young, intellectually curious or not, social or not, loud and annoying or not, allergic to whatever, etc... Give us your tired your poor longing for... you get it. We may debate how well we do in a few areas, but I'm just going to say, o.k., we do pretty well on these criteria. But I picked the easy one first.

How can we 'welcome' others more fully? It's all well and good to have a diverse set of people sitting in the pews on Sunday (and frankly I could argue that we might be open to that, but not achieving it all that well), but are we welcoming them to fully participate in the body of our Church? To be welcoming doesn't just mean to passively accept what comes our way. It involves asking people to be involved. To serve as a lay minister, a Sunday school teacher, an event planner, a choir member, a committee member? It means getting to know them where they are.

And what happens when welcoming requires even more effort? Do we welcome someone we don't know very well to be in close proximity to our children? To be in the building when we know only a single member or two is there to ready the altar or do something else? I hope we do. But, I also hope that we realize that this means we need to have volunteers look out for our safety.

What about when welcoming requires having some regard? Am I welcoming a blind person by disregarding that she can't follow along in the Book of Common Prayer? Am I truly being welcoming of a new family if I disregard that their children need Christian Education, but am unwilling to teach a class?

What if I'm really good at welcoming the same five people to do everything? What if I'm really good at welcoming the same three people

Stewardship Corner

The Stewardship Corner is about ready to get into full steam ahead mode for our fall campaign. We are not quite there yet when you read this message, but by October we will be on track to move forward for more of God's blessings.

For those of you new to the Episcopal church, traditionally every fall there is a "campaign" which revolves around various Stewardship themes. I have always tried to make them incorporate a bit of fun and fellowship.

However, at some point it comes down to our Parish members putting forth a "pledge." So, again, for those of you that are new, you might ask what in the world is a pledge? In its simplest form, it is a card or email or other means of communication which gives the Parish Treasurer and Vestry an indication of what you plan to give to the Parish strictly for Operating monies. They then use that information to set a budget as to what this Parish can afford in the coming year—in this case that will be the calendar year 2020.

As a child I grew up in a Pentecostal setting (no snakes involved—just lots of rules). Their version of a "pledge" was your tithe. Now the biblical tithe was 10%, so there is one guideline. However, this newsletter is not big enough to discuss all the ramifications of that (10% of what; gross or net; and so forth).

This parish uses your "pledge" to pay for normal operational expenses. Expenses such as our Rector's salary and benefits. Or the heating and air conditioning bills. Or snow removal and mowing expenses. Or insurance expenses. And so on down the line it goes.

And my last comment at this time is three-fold.

One: there is NO mandatory "pledge" from any parishioner—EVER. This church welcomes everyone, REGARDLESS. It is just your discussion with your family and with God as to what you give to this Parish in order to keep it open and moving forward.

Two: many, many parishioners give to other causes or callings of the church. Examples might be Tobit's Trace or our wonderful Music Program. Or many of

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A View from the Pew

Every human who ever lived owes their life to the sun [whether we say the sun “of God” or not is personal choice—a “choice” that is developed from equal parts upbringing, environment, and the individual genetic makeup that fuels adolescent-to-adult thought and analysis]. In any case, it is an



Einsteinian scientific fact that no human who has ever lived—nor any amoeba, protozoa, worm, mollusk, dinosaur or other of the millions of life forms that have ever existed or now exist—would ever have existed without the sun.

And, of course, this includes the Son (of God). Fully human—and for Christians, fully divine—Jesus could never have come into human existence without the sun. Makes me think we should be capitalizing the Sun, too, for it seems only fair to pay it the homage that it deserves. While the earliest humans revered the Sun as the source of their existence, we seem to take it for granted. The only light that matters to followers of Jesus comes through the Son, not the Sun.

But for deists, paying homage to God is in a sense paying homage to the Sun. That is because a proper reverence of God should carry over to all that ostensibly came into existence through this God, including the Sun. But this presupposes that there is a “God” that exists in fact, just like the Sun, and not just as a human construct.

And that is what this entity we call God is: a human construct. Whether: a) the human “why are we here?” condition-caused anxiety led to the creation of this all-powerful being to whom we could pay due respects and in return get protection in this life, and an even better one after; or, b) this deity truly pre-existed the world and willed itself into conscious existence through its human-formed creation, the fact is that this “God” would still be yawning in utter anonymity without the Sun.

Think about this: the age of the universe is estimated to be 13,8 billion years. The sun, 4.6 billion years; the earth, 4.5 billion years; humanity, 200,000 years. And the earliest conception of a heavenly deity? Roughly 8,000 years. So if you condensed the age of the earth (not the universe, just the earth) into 24 hours, the age

Sr Warden Notes Continued from page 2

but forget about long time members and their changing needs? What if I close myself off and don’t allow others the gift of being welcoming to me?

What if I write long articles for the newsletter that pose more questions than answers?

Stewardship Commission Continued from page 2

dozens of other funds or causes. None of this is included in our “Pledge.” It is used strictly for Operational purposes—like Tony’s love of heat in the wintertime (for those of you who have never heard his testimony on stewardship around this subject area, it was one of the best ever stewardship 2-minute talks I have ever heard).

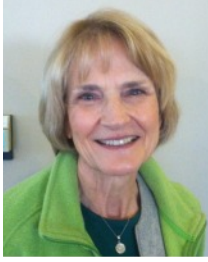
Lastly, in closing: “Pledge” income is by far and away the largest source of income for the Parish—about 80% or greater. Again, for those of you new to the Episcopal Church, there is no income from the Diocese—in fact the Parish pays a certain amount to the Diocese to keep it open and running. And, certainly, we can agree that an active and vibrant Diocese is critical to the success of not only our Parish, but all Parishes. This is a common misperception for those not accustomed to the Episcopal Church.

Let us give thanks for God’s blessings at St. Raphael (with a bit of fun added in to show our humanity).

Roger L Kirk, Stewardship Committee Chair

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Music Notes



Our beloved choir will sing again in worship beginning on the second Sunday of September. Thanks very much to our cantors, who have individually led the singing these past three summer months. Thanks also to our substitute musicians, Dr. Ron Pen and Peggy Oakes. Those

members who were present in worship during August were treated to dulcimer and fiddle music from Dr. Pen, as well as piano and flute duets from Peggy and her daughter, Sue Smith.

Returning to the choir this season are Dana Berry, Marguerite Emmons, Amy Smereck, Joan Schmidt, Junghyun Lee, Carolina Fernandez, Kris Olson, Michael Cannon, and Clement Baloyi. Thomas Bollinger sang with us in May, but has now returned to Kenyon College in Ohio for his sophomore year. Kimberly Applegate and George Parker also sang with the choir last year but have moved back to Indiana, and are greatly missed!

So we do have openings in our choir for anyone who enjoys singing! You will find caring and accepting individuals, each a unique personality yet a harmonious and unified group. We meet for nine months of the year to provide beautiful music as part of our worship, and we are grateful for the opportunity to offer praise to God through song!

A reminder to our wonderful congregation that a quality music program is not inexpensive. Choir scholars/staff singers are not funded through the church budget, but by gifts and pledges to the Friends of Music at St. Raphael fund. Thanks so very much to our benefactors for their continuing support!

Blessings for fall with its new season of worship and music,

Melinda Storey, Organist/Choirmaster

Christian Education

Sunday School meets each Sunday at 10:15 a.m.

Please join us as we explore the Bible and our faith through Animals of the Bible. If you are a parent, grandparent, or friend of a child and would like to participate in our fun by volunteering one Sunday every two months please email Amy Fowler at amywatsonfowler@gmail.com.

Upcoming lessons and leaders:

Sept. 8th 'The Frog' - Sr. Becky

Sept. 15th 'The Quail' - (needed)

Sept. 22 'The Donkey' - (needed)

Nursery Attendant Needed

We're still trying to find a Nursery Attendant for our little ones, so if you know of anyone over the age of 18 who would be interested, please let Dana Berry know. danabruceberry@gmail.com or 859-381-1830

Introducing - the Sunday School piggy bank!

An important part of Christian Education is the concept of Stewardship. To teach our children to be givers, we will be taking up a children's collection at Sunday School each week. Please send your child with a few coins to place in the offering bank on Sunday.

Sunday School meeting Tuesday Sept. 3 at 5:30 p.m.

All Sunday School teachers and volunteers please attend this short meeting to review some policies, procedures, and norms, and to compare notes on what's working and where support is needed.

Interested in Confirmation, Reaffirmation, or Reception?

Bishop Mark will be visiting St. Raphael's on Nov. 11 and will be confirming, reaffirming, and receiving parishioners into the church. If you are interested in confirmation, reaffirmation, or reception, please let Rev. Helen know by September 1st.

"The Well of Lexington provides a holistic program of safe housing, recovery support, education, and healing for women exploited by sex trafficking to empower them to reach economic independence and live productive lives. We provide safe, supportive housing and comprehensive services free of charge for two years here in Lexington. The women live together, recover together and support each other.

We are currently looking for qualified women to provide that education component by leading in-house groups or classes to the residents. The topics can range from things such as seeking safety, relapse prevention, anger management, domestic violence, character building, and more.

We are also in need of women volunteers to assist the residents in getting to daily appointments, meetings, and resources within the community. The times can vary during the day, evening, or weekends - so you can easily choose times that are convenient to you!

Volunteers will need to sign a confidentiality agreement and submit to a background check (the cost is on us). If this is something you would be interested in, please email Amanda DuFour, the Program Coordinator, at programdir@thewelllexington.com."

Visit our website: www.thewelllexington.com

Like our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/thewelllexington/>

The Well is very close to St Raphael's and, in fact, we already serve them in a way as they attend the weekday women's groups here. Apart from this appeal, the Well is also in need of clothing and footwear (all sizes), coats, purses, underwear, books, magazines, make up and sanitary items. Please bring any of the above to the office, and speak to Helen about any clarification. Thanks!"

Thank you,
Amanda DuFour, LSW
Program Coordinator
The Well of Lexington, Inc.
110 East Third Street
Lexington KY 40508
(c)859.619.3888

A Good Read

Tobit's Dog: a story about living a life of faith in a land of oppression. By Michael Nicholas Richard

When Ken and I started visiting St. Raphael's and learning about Tobit's Trace, we decided that it might be a good idea to revisit the Book of Tobit. That said, we read it together, discussed it and at about the same time we came across the book, Tobit's Dog.

I share these words about Tobit's Dog, in the event that you would like to take a deep dive into The Book of Tobit and to share in the Michael N. Richard's contemporary rendering.

Gentle Suggestion: Re-read the Book of Tobit before reading Tobit's Dog.

In the Apocrypha, the Book of Tobit takes place in Nineveh in the 8th century B.C. where Jews from Galilee have been living in exile for several generations. Tobit's family is one of the few families who have always been faithful to God.

The Book of Tobit is the only time in Scripture that we meet the Archangel Raphael, whose name means "God Heals." It is also the only time a dog appears as a domestic pet. There's a quest, adventures, miraculous healing, and a wedding with God at its center. It is a story about living a faithful life in a foreign land.

Tobit's Dog is a retelling of the Book of Tobit set in North Carolina during the Great Depression. The characters include: Tobit Messenger, his wife Anna, adult son, Tobias, Sarah, Ace Redbone, a traveling (angel) musician, Okra, the dog and more. The book explains that "okra" means "soul" in the West African Language spoken by Tobit's grandfather.

"All he had was four acres, including swampy land, a cow, and the mule. Even making the taxes was growing difficult. The assessors were harder on Negroes than they were on the white folk...." And now there is a new, inexperienced white sheriff in town. A sheriff who seems to believe there is one law for fine white folk and another law for the Negroes. A sheriff who does not like Tobit and his family.

Tobit's faith is as strong as his life is hard, and as deep as the love of his family. When bird droppings accidentally fall in his eyes and he loses his sight, he falls into deep despair. He tells God he feels as though he is a stranger in his own life. Even in dark despair, he does not lose faith in God.

One day Ace Redbone, a traveling musician and "distant cousin" shows up to visit the Messenger family. Okra senses Ace's extraordinary presence before he even arrived. Ace seemed to have a calming effect on everyone he met. Ace convinces Tobit to allow him to take Tobias

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Gardenside at Sunset Event

I want to start off by saying thank you to everyone who came out to last week's Gardenside at Sunset. My heart was incredibly full after a wonderful cultural evening that Friday night. I had hoped of having a cultural event that brought people together in the 11th district. The Greater Gardenside Association worked incredibly hard to also dream of and make it happen. A dedicated group of people worked endlessly to put on Gardenside at Sunset and I am grateful. Many people commented on how happy they were to see such an incredible gathering in their neighborhood with lots of diversity! A big shout out to all who organized it and who participated. I especially want to thank those who are on the G2 board and helped with the event. Susan Spalding, Rebekah Frazier, David Jones, Judy Mahaffey, Mark Dawahare, Gabino Martinez, Lamonte Nowlin, Diana Smith, Helen Van Koevering, Monica Calleja, Mirna A Cerradas, Denver Gonzalez, Ginny Wilson, and Miguel Lucero! You all rock! Thanks for your vision and dedication to make this beautiful community celebration happen!



Check out the calendar and other flyers on our website to stay up-to-date on other upcoming events! As always, should you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me at jreynolds@lexingtonky.gov or at (859) 280-8248.

Jennifer Reynolds

11th District Representative

A Good Read

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to collect a debt owed to him from another cousin. Thus, as in the Apocryphal story, there is a road trip, meeting new friends, breaking what some call a curse, a romance, a joyful homecoming, a seemingly miraculous cure, an angel and a well-loved dog.

Tobit's Dog, like the Apocryphal counterpart, is a story about living a life of faith in a land of oppression. Admittedly, the horrors and ugliness of racism that wove its way through this text, at times, made me close the book for relief -- I returned. In the end, it proved to be an important text of faith and redemption. Trust in God, even when God seems to be absent, is essential. Showing kindness to others is essential. Doing the right thing, even when it costs you everything, is essential. Following where God leads -- even though you may not know the way, is essential. Tobit's Dog offers us lessons in tolerance, dignity, faith, hope, and love during challenging times. These are messages of both the Book of Tobit and Michael Richard's book, Tobit's Dog.

Rev. Jan Cantrell



PLEASE JOIN US IN WITNESSING
THE BAPTISM OF OUR DAUGHTER

Nazanin Sakineh Davis

ST. RAPHAEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH
1891 PARKERS MILL RD, LEXINGTON, KY

LUNCHEON IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

A View from the Pew

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of humanity would barely take up one second, and the age of God (as defined by human-expressed earthly consciousness) would be 1/16th of one second.

None of this really matters. Perception is reality, humanity believes in a God of some sort, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The sun won't burn out for another 8 billion years, but that's not to say humans will survive for even a small fraction of that time. While the conscious expression of God will extinguish with the last human, if God did in fact pre-exist this post-human expression only 8,000 years ago, God will continue to do so in a post-human world, even a sunless one.

All this is beyond me--I know not of what I write. God is a mystery in a million billion ways, and this is just one of them. Yet the Bible says that man was made in God's image.

So, what I do know is that if the realm of God is measured just by the existence of humanity, that is more than enough. Rocks and streams and space and stars may have no need of the Almighty. But we do. Man needs God like plants need light. And as the Sun gives earthly life, the Son shows us how to live it. En route to life and light eternal once the Sun goes dark forever.

Upcoming Events for September

Crafter's Circle Resumes

The Circle will be resume meeting on the 14 of September at 10:00am. Everyone is welcome to join us at that time.

BUILD Meetings Starting up this fall

Sept. 10th - Listening Process Kick-off, Location TBD

Sept. 25 & Oct 8 House meetings

BUILD requests your attendance at the Listening Process Kick-off and a house meeting. These events are vital to the process of determining community issues that BUILD churches will explore.

Guest Preacher & Celebrant Sept. 15th

Sept. 15th Please welcome Rev. Dr. Christian Brady, a priest of this diocese and a Hebrew literature scholar as guest preacher and celebrant.

Sages to meet on Sept 19

Sages meets on Sept. 19th at 11:30. It is at the Red Lobster on Nicholasville, Rd. and is hosted by Paula Brockman 859-494-3902.

Dinner Church Sept. 28

Sept. 28th is Dinner Church with Nancy Christiano speaking about environmental justice and green ministry.

Baptism of Nazanin Davis Sept 29

Sept. 29th we will celebrate the baptism of Nazanin Davis. All the parish members are invited by the Davis family to luncheon downstairs afterwards.

Celebration of St Michael and All Saints Sept. 29

Sept. 29th is also the feast of St. Michael's and All Angels. We are hosting St. Michael's Episcopal church for a reception at 5 pm with sung Compline



A Church Mouse in God's House

Why are you people always looking down on us? Right. Never mind, stupid question. Because we're usually on the floor and you're usually not. It's just hard to know when to get offended by something and when not to. One minute I'm getting called a snowflake and the next an insensitive rodent. Not by my kind of course, they don't care. But to interact in the world of humans from time to time... well, that's a challenge.

So, how DO you all figure it out? What is acceptable and what isn't? I gather that it's o.k. to make fun of yourself, and by extension your race, gender, religion, age and body type. In most cases your spouse is fair game although this seems to end badly from time to time.

Curiously enough the tables turn at political persuasion, when it suddenly becomes fine to speak poorly of someone else's but not your own.

Sometimes I hear you utter the phrase, "we're going to have to agree to disagree," which honestly just seems hilarious. You all do stick up for each other when going through a hard time, and that seems great, but I never hear any of you say, "Bill and I really agree that each other is wrong about X and that has been the basis of our friendship."

It's not like you don't talk about big topics... Every week it's life, death, salvation, lunch, grace, the creeds, appetizers, baptism, fiscal policy, dessert, climate change, you name it. And it's rare that anyone ever really gets offended. Do you wait until you leave? Do you just not invite people who you think won't agree? How does this work?

But the really bizarre parts are what you do choose to get bothered about. Someone called God an "It!" You called my piccolo a flute! I feel like you didn't capitalize "God" when you said it! You said LGBT and didn't add a "Q!" You called the mouse a rat! O.k. ... maybe keep that one.

I really am impressed at the ways you navigate language with so few difficulties. It would just be nice to have a rule book sometimes. But seriously, I do look up to you.



Birthdays for September

Kym Dedman	Sept 2
Haley Morgan	Sept 4
Mark Van Koevering	Sept. 6
Kevin Davis	Sept. 12
Chris Bollinger	Sept. 14
Steve Krolak	Sept. 15
Beth Bollenger	Sept. 16
Moses Massaquoi	Sept. 19
Don Miller	Sept. 19
Michael Binkauskas	Sept. 20
Steffen Wilson	Sept. 21
Stephanie Fox	Sept. 22

Anniversaries for September

Kevin & Afsi Davis	Sept. 6
Bill & Debbie Emrick	Sept. 12
Dick & Doris McNally	Sept. 16
Kym Dedman	Sept. 29
Jonathon & Jean-Ellen Melton	Sept. 29

Please let me know if we miss anyone's special day! We'd hate to leave out anyone on their birthday or anniversary. Send an email to me at danabruceberry@gmail.com if we don't have your dates.

Tropical Dinner Church with Bishop Mark



Bishop Mark receives our newest members - L to R - Kimberly Siahkoochi; Nazanin, Afsi and Kevin Davis at Dinner Church Aug. 30th. Welcome to the St. Raphael's Family!



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Articles and news information for September must be submitted by **Friday, Sept 20, 2019** to Dana Berry at danabruceberry@gmail.com

Sunday Services

8:30 am Holy Eucharist (Rite I)

Christian Education all ages 10:15

11am Holy Eucharist (Rite II)

Children are welcome during each service - there are activity sheets and coloring pages at the back of the church for their enjoyment.

Wednesday

12 Noon Holy Eucharist with Unction

6:30 pm Holy Eucharist with Unction