



From the Rector

We come to the end of 2019 remembering good and hard times that we have seen in our lives, in the world and in our church community. We have made new friends, lost some older ones. We have celebrated life every Sunday, and have been strengthened to live with everything in between. We have seen generosity, gratitude, care, compassion, hard work, commitment, vision, joy, patience, kindness and love amongst us. Take a moment to think back over 2019 – these gifts of the Spirit amongst us are given so that we might know hope, peace, joy and love in our lives, and the Christmas promise of Emmanuel, God-with-Us. We know ourselves blessed – our response to God is to be people of blessing.



Rev. Canon Dr. Helen Van Koevinger

The feast of Epiphany on January 6 brings the Christmas season to an end. The season ends, but the work of Christmas remains as we journey through 2020. We continue our walk through the gospel of Matthew this year, and we will hear more about this Christmas work as he lays it out for us. Howard Thurman, an African-American theologian, educator, and civil rights leader, showed that he was influenced by Matthew's gospel when he wrote his poem, the 'Work of Christmas':

When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart.

Our vestry and I will be meeting on the weekend of January 10th to work on our vision for 2020 together at St Raphael's. Our diocese is continuing to flesh out the vision for the Diocese of Lexington as a community of faith doing the work of Christmas together: 'Being the Church, Being the Change'. I'm looking forward to 2020 with you all!

Happy New Year!

Sr Warden's Corner



Tony Lo Bianco,
Sr. Warden

I think that if I were given the power to design the year I would do it a lot differently. It certainly wouldn't start in the coldest month of the year. I might make it start in April... the kind of month when it's starting to be warm enough to want to get outside, spend some energy, make good on some New Year's Resolutions. It might conflict with Easter, which I would leave there, but I think that's o.k.

Christmas should be in the Summer... I was always envious of kids that had Summer birthday parties... and filled with lots of daylight no less. Memorial Day? That's a no-brainer... end of the year. Reflect. Independence Day ... probably a cold month. Independence can be scary and demand introspection. Sure, we throw off the yoke of oppression, but it's not all smooth sailing after that. Thanksgiving... sure, keep it in the Fall after the harvest. I suppose people had their reasons, and maybe it's a good thing that I'm not in charge.

But January... that's a tough month. The celebrations are generally over, the anticipation too. We're stuck with New Year's Resolutions that we're probably second guessing by the 2nd week, or maybe we gave up on the idea altogether. Helping the poor and spreading good news seemed so much more en vogue in December.

I did some research to support my hypothesis that January would be a weak month for Church attendance. What I found was that I was wrong – January is actually a pretty good month in terms of making it to Church. There's a slight lull the first few weeks, but by the third week things tend to be hopping.

Why is this? To be honest, I don't know. Maybe it's a carry-over effect from Christmas. Maybe some have New Year's resolutions that involve more regular attendance. Maybe the prospect of a new and improved Sr. Warden piques interest. But my guess is that it is an issue of self care. We yearn for something to connect us to something larger than ourselves, and Netflix can only fill so much of that void.

How can we be cognizant of this as parishioners? Healing is something we need all year long, but perhaps January is when others need it the most. I know that the Vestry will be discussing their plans for the upcoming year as well as how they relate to the Diocesan vision. New opportunities – programs, committees, etc.. will likely be born during this time. Let us know your suggestions, your needs and wants, and how you might be able to participate.

We just celebrated a birth, and that almost by definition is a beginning not an ending. Let's think about how we can nurture the life of Christ throughout the start, and all times of the year.

Tony

Self-Care Group for Women

Sunday, January 26, 5:00-7:00pm

The Women's Advent Group had such a great time together in December that we will continue to meet once a month in 2020 for fellowship, a light meal, and collective practice of self-care techniques. In January, Margaret McGladrey will offer a session of Kundalini Yoga, a mindfulness tradition that interweaves physical movement, breathwork, meditation, and sacred sounds, from 5:00 to 6:00pm before a light meal and conversation at 6:00pm. Future group meetings will introduce different self-care techniques. Please contact margaret.mcgladrey@gmail.com if you are interested in participating!

2020
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Stewardship Corner

Roger Kirk, Stewardship Chair

I just returned from one of the best Services we at St. Raphael can provide. A celebration regarding the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Of course, it was fabulous, but I also enjoyed looking around a packed church with all the diversity that the Lord has bestowed upon us all. And the children; I am a bit out of practice on that aspect of parenting, but it was joyous to watch all of them enjoying the service in their own special manner.

So, one might ask, what does that have to do with Stewardship? Well, as my mind wandered a bit to all the fabulous music, I looked out at all the change this church has undergone in my five or so years here. Wondrous, powerful change. God is indeed good.

In 2020, there will be more change. The Vestry will be reconstituting several of the Parish's committees and their structures. The Vestry will meet at a retreat in early January and look over our vision. 2020 will bring very exciting times for all of us!

God bless us all as we think back on all the various celebrations in December and the Dawning of the New Year 2020, which will come equipped with a "Leap Year" bonus!

A View from the Pew

The anomalies of Jesus and FDR

Anomalies abound in the New Year! Jesus, the rebel rabbi who taught the Way to peace on earth and eternity in heaven and became the King of kings, came into the world how? Not in a palace, or 5-star hotel, nor even a Motel 6, but in a feeding trough on the hay-strewn floor of a barn. He exited similarly (but intentionally) penurious and powerless ("Peter, sheath your sword"), but most importantly he left it selflessly, only to serve God and to serve all humanity by completing his divine mission with not a thought for his own human welfare.



Richard
Dawahare

Coincidentally during this holiday season, I was reading a new book on my hero, FDR—President Franklin Delano Roosevelt—War and Peace: FDR's Final Odyssey: D-Day to Yalta, 1943–1945 by Nigel Hamilton. This detailed history taught me so much more that I did not know about the unfathomably rich character, class and goodness of FDR, and just how instrumental he truly was for the post-depression recovery, the success of D-Day, our victory in the WWII, and the post-war international peace and recovery that continues to this very day. Much of America's goodness and strength is truly due to this one man.

Because of FDR's magnanimous vision and insistence, America sought to free the world of colonialism, contesting even his staunch ally, Winston Churchill, who fought to keep the imperial British grip on its foreign victims. America freed the Philippines, and others in Southeast Asia, Central Europe, Africa, India and beyond. America also succeeded in getting vanquished enemies Germany and Japan back on their feet and doing things the right way, with democratic institutions to ensure justice, civil rights, freedom and protections for all. America's use of its strength for the welfare of others mirrors the holy teachings of Jesus himself.

What most people then, and many still today, did not realize was that FDR was a paraplegic throughout his term. He was not always so, however. For FDR had long been a strong, intelligent, public-service minded leader. His 6' 3" stature perfectly fitted his ascending career: Harvard, Columbia law, New York state senator, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and Vice-Presidential candidate in the 1920 election. Then tragedy struck when he contracted polio in 1921 and his legs became permanently paralyzed, a seemingly career-ending event if there ever was one.

But FDR determined to overcome and fulfill his destiny, no matter how unlikely the odds seemed. With the encouragement of his wife, Eleanor, and trusted advisor, Louis Howe, FDR worked to regain his strength, and to re-embark on his political career. While he would never walk again, he did find ways to stand without assistance, and every public appearance was sans wheelchair. FDR was an Episcopalian and a man of deep religious faith. Of vital importance was the fact that FDR was one of the world's most good-humored can-do optimists. Thus, he became the governor of New York in 1928, before being elected to the presidency in 1932.

After leading America out of the Great Depression, after leading his people through hope and optimism, buttressed by new government action truly for the greater good, and after leading America to the brink of success in WWII, he made the ultimate sacrifice: FDR literally gave his life to serve America and the world. He was deathly ill while taking office for his fourth term. But he was selfless in fulfilling his sense of duty for he knew the importance of his mission and that the world-saving stakes hanging in the balance were dependent on the leadership that only he could provide.

By overcoming his maladies, FDR turned personal tragedy into universal salvation. Ironically, however, and as he himself observed, it was his suffering that humbled him, and enabled him to identify and empathize with the weak, the poor and the suffering of those here at home and the world over. In fact, had he not been stricken it is likely that his mission may never have been undertaken, much less achieved.

Yes, one human can make that kind of difference, especially one living in the spirit of God and consistent with the teachings of Jesus, as FDR surely did. And yes, one human can make a world of miserable difference on the other end of that spectrum, as Adolf Hitler showed. Yet even Hitler acknowledged a deity—he just thought his God willed him to do as he did, and his fear-filled nation deified him.

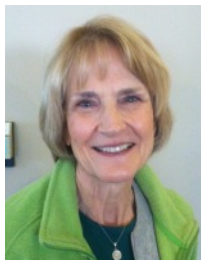
Thus, among the many lessons of this era in world history is the clarity between good and evil. The test for true Godliness and all that entails ("the true God," "God's Will," and the "Holy Spirit") is consistency with the teachings of Jesus. Do a nation's actions, does the speech of its leaders and populace reflect the moral values of Jesus—truth, compassion, love, mercy and justice? For only by doing so, as FDR said, will the "American people in their righteous might...win through to absolute victory."

FDR, like Jesus, was an anomaly. For he was a man who could not walk yet led America to victory, making it the strongest nation in the world in every way—morally, economically, socially and militarily. At his funeral, with mourners lined from Georgia to the Capital, a serviceman said it best, "FDR taught a lame nation how to walk."

We therefore must be vigilant to not only follow the teachings of Jesus but to ensure the selection of leaders who truly do the same. And we must stand up to those who demonstrably do not. As our Book of Common Prayer exhorts us, "God grant us the strength and courage to love you with gladness and singleness of heart."

Goodness flowing from goodness is no anomaly.

Music Notes



Melinda
Storey

Christmas at St. Raphael

We did not get a white Christmas again this year, but in all other ways, our Christmas services at St. Raphael Episcopal Church were like a dream fulfilled. The beauty of our sanctuary, with profuse flowers, greenery, candles, and white vestments; the familiar beloved readings and inspirational preaching; the wealth of music celebrating the birth of Christ: all these served to create fulfillment of our longing for news of a Redeemer, Christ the Lord, born in a humble stable in Bethlehem, God's plan for our salvation.

And so, Christmas Blessings to all our congregation, and a Happy Epiphany to follow! Our Rector has graciously granted me a leave of absence so that I can better care for my husband, who has been ill this year. In my place, Dr. Junghyun Lee, soprano in our choir, will begin directing the choir and selecting the music each week. Junghyun recently completed her D.M.A. (Doctor of Musical Arts) degree at the University of Kentucky. From our congregation, Peggy Oakes and Chris Young will provide instrumental music for the hymns, as well as accompany the choir. Many thanks to Junghyun, Peggy, and Chris for their willingness to step in and share their talents. And special thanks to our choir members for their enthusiasm and steadfast support for our music program!

Happy New Year to the St. Raphael congregation and friends,

Melinda Storey, Organist/Choirmaster

A Collect for our Diocesan Vision

Gracious Father, your Spirit connects and restores all life to unity with you and each other in Christ Jesus. Energize our faith so that we may courageously live into our calling to be the church by praising your Holy Name, making disciples and discovering your presence at work in our neighborhoods. Shape us to be the change that brings hope and joy to an aching world; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

A Church Mouse in God's House



I learned something pretty interesting today. I mean, it won't come as news to you, but it did to me: humans speak in different tones! O.k., mice do too, but really you all just sound the same to us. But I heard someone referring to one of you as having this "deep, baritone voice" and I said to the wife, "well don't they all?" At first she agreed, but then she mentioned that maybe to humans themselves they don't all sound the same. Well... mind blown!

It's not that we don't understand what you say (take no such comfort!), it's just we don't recognize the difference in your pitch. Apparently men are usually lower than women?

Young higher than older? Who has one tail but no clue? This mouse!

Anyway, it got me thinking about things that seem obvious to a group are often irrelevant to those outside the group. I've heard you all fight about religion a lot... like sometimes actual wars! Other times like ways of thinking about things (is that bread really someone's body?), or even which ancient person who said to love each other and help the poor you should worship. Sorry... it seems a bit silly to us.

Of course we've had our own great schisms... Should we join with the rats? Is it o.k. to knock over the trash if you don't plan to eat from it? What is the proper protocol for licking one another's fur? I guess maybe these seem like silly arguments to you, but I tell you, we've expelled mice for disagreeing with the official position on these points.

How do you know when something matters and is worth a fight or when it is just a petty squabble? When does assertiveness become stubbornness become close-mindedness? When is diversity preferred over unity? When not?



Hey, I don't know, I'm just one of those high-pitched squeaky mice.

Up-Coming Events At St Raphael's

Crafter's Circle

The Crafters will meet downstairs in the main parish hall on Jan 17 & 31 at 10:00am. Everyone is welcome to come and work on quilting projects, or knitting or crocheting. If you'd like to learn how to knit, crochet or quilt, we have several very experienced crafters who would love to teach you!

BUILD NEWS

Jan. - March 2020 Events

TBD for Q1 2020: Issue Research events, Justice Ministry Network Meetings, Issue Discussions, all in preparation for the April 27th 6:30 p.m. Nehemiah Action meeting at Heritage Hall. Learn more about BUILD on their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/BUILDlex/>

Sages

Sages will meet January 16 at 11:30am at the Asian Wind Restaurant; 3735 Palamar Center, Lexington.

Please let Jeannie Graham (859-608-1891) know by Jan 10 if you are planning on being there



Outreach Opportunity

Here is a picture of the makeup bags donated by St. Raphael's Church last month. We appreciate your donation! The clients were so excited to receive them. Thank you again,

Ashley Ratliff, BSW
Social Worker
Hope Center Recovery Program for Women
1524 Versailles Road

Children's Christmas Party has been moved to Jan 5th at the Church after the 11am Service. Please join us!

Fiction Reading Group Meeting Monday January 13 at 6:30 p.m.

For January we will be reading and discussing *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer. We will be meeting at the Good Foods Coop Cafe. For more information contact Tony LoBianco at tflobi1@uky.edu

Reading Camp - Kids don't just read, they soar!

Childhood illiteracy in Kentucky is a problem. Reading Camp offers a life-changing solution. Each camper receives the following, at no cost to the families:

- A full week of day or overnight camp
- Over 17 hours of intensive, small group reading instruction
- Fun, confidence-building activities
- New, age-appropriate books
- A high-quality backpack
- Time and attention of caring adults and teens
- Meals and snacks

In 2019, contributions to the Bishop's Discretionary Fund will go to Reading Camp. This funding will be used to increase the Reading Camp Director's working hours. This will allow Reading Camp to offer training, grant application assistance, and organizational support to our Diocese congregations that operate Reading Camp programs and those who would like to start new programs.

Learn more online at www.readingcamprocks.org or at our Facebook page, Reading Camp! If you are interested in volunteering with Reading Camp or if you have any questions, please email Sarah Harcourt Watts, Director, at info@readingcamprocks.org or call the Reading Camp office at Mission House: 859-252-6527.

Mission Update - Thank you for your generous contributions to those in need!

MISSION



\$160 KROGER GIFT CARD DONATIONS

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS FOR THREE WOMEN AND THEIR FIVE CHILDREN x 8 HAND-CRAFTED COSMETIC KITS DONATED x 55 LBS CLOTHING DONATED x FURNITURE AND HOMEWARES FOR NEW APARTMENT DONATED

16

CHILDREN SPONSORED
SALVATION ARMY ANGEL TREE



48
CHILDREN SERVED
THROUGH BACKPACK
MINISTRIES

39

HAND-CRAFTED COSMETIC
KITS DELIVERED



4

CHILDREN'S COATS DONATED
breast pump and accessories, toddler food,
and 10 lbs children's clothing donated



210

STOCKINGS STUFFED FOR PRISON
MINISTRIES

232

ITEMS DONATED TO RELIEF
scarves, mittens, jewelry, hats, socks, toys, etc.



ABRO
Serving the children of Belarus

American Belarussian Relief Organization

Birthdays and Anniversary Celebrations

January Birthdays

Mike Booth	Jan 5
Dana Berry	Jan 9
Al Smith	Jan 9
Amanda Vance	Jan 13
Carol Summers	Jan 14
Patty Bond	Jan 15
Karen Frohoff	Jan 17
Paul Wilson	Jan 18
Michael Summers	Jan 19
Natey Peterson	Jan 20
Laura Vance	Jan 26
Kylie Van Koeving	Jan 27
Drew Anderson	Jan 28
Sonja Gaitskill	Jan 29
Trevor Krolak	Jan 29
Melissa Booth	Jan 31
Heather Matics	Jan 31

January Anniversaries

Gary & Shaunne Bourland	Jan 1
Don & Vicki Colliver	Jan 1

Please let us know if we missed a birthday or anniversary! We try to keep the records up to date, but if you've recently joined the parish, we want to celebrate your special days with you! So, let us know! Contact Dana Berry, (danabruceberry@gmail.com) or the parish office.

Children's Christmas Play - "Yes, God!"



St Raphael Episcopal Church
1891 Parkers Mill Rd
Lexington, KY 40504
Rev. Canon Dr. Helen Van Koeving, Rector
Phone: 859-255-4987
Email: Office: revhelen@sreclex.org or SROffice@sreclex.org
Website: www.sreclex.org



The Herald is a monthly publication of St. Raphael the Archangel Episcopal Church, 1891 Parkers Mill Road, Lexington, KY 40504. Phone 859.255.4987. Our newsletter is mailed or e-mailed free of charge to approximately 250 members and friends. If you have someone whom you would like to receive a copy of the newsletter, please notify the Church Office and have them added to the list of friends.

Articles and news information for September must be submitted by **Jan 24, 2020** 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