



The Herald

St. Raphael the Archangel Episcopal Church

Vol 55 Issue 5

May 2020

From the Rector

At the time of writing, we are in the 7th week of these strange days of #healthyathome and COVID-19. I have found comfort in finding naming all this for what it is: trauma. True, some may be able to experience all this as similar to the trauma of a wedding couple – good, but with pain we wouldn't have understood before this event and maybe are surprised to discover. Others are expressing grief in anger, sadness, loneliness, confusion, impatience. Others are simply made more invisible and vulnerable by #healthyathome.



Rev. Canon Dr. Helen Van Koevering

I've been thinking about what we are grieving as St Raphael's. Before all this, we had our regular 8.30 & 11am Eucharist services, depending on our social commitments, depending on our preference for contemplative, shorter services, or family, music-focused, longer services. We love greeting and catching up with one another at the Peace, welcoming friends and new folks, sharing memories and current news, special days and smiles. We delight in our music and choir. Between the services, there were book studies, Sunday school activities, meetings of various volunteers, committees and parish groups. Some shared coffee, conversation and laughs, others caught up on news and needs. On Wednesdays, midday and 6.30 healing Eucharist services created quite intimate small groups. Sage's meals are a wonderful way to catch up with friends. Eucharistic Visitors serve the home-bound and sick. We are a church that serves one another well. We also love the beauty of nature and in the holiness of our sanctuary lovingly adorned with flowers and altar linens, and enjoy our Tobit's Trace and gardens. We find reasons to get together – for crafts, for fun, for making crosses and seasonal decorating, meals together as regularly as any holiday allowed, and enjoyed how Dinner Church was developing as an expression of community inside and outside the church. We join in 'outreaching' in Gardenside and Lexington as much as we enjoy 'inreach' – connecting and being together. All of that - our gatherings, hospitality, food-sharing, conversation, and inclusive participation - form the 'interconnected whole' that is St Raphael's. All that is what we are grieving, isn't it?

What holds all of it together is the Eucharist. There are many different eucharistic practices and theologies, and how we understand Eucharist as vital, sustaining, transformative practice of faith has been argued for 2000 years, let alone in the last few weeks! Eucharist for me makes sense of the rest of life. It makes sense of gathered community life as the fabric of life, of Eucharist being made together, and admits awareness of our souls' needs. Eucharist is a solidarity with others, a deep gratitude, an imagining of a different world, and an acknowledgement of a power that is not our own. We've missed this focus of our worship.

Our 'usual' eucharistic gathering has been put on hold, but the expression of eucharist - community, creativity, joy, care, beauty - has remained. Some call this the 'power of sacrament'. All those years of remembering Jesus sacramentally help us now. Who has been touched by the buddy calls our mission committee set up? Who took a sharp intake of breath at seeing Amy's flowers on Easter Sunday? Who smiled at hearing Junghyun and Chris? Who has enjoyed Kevin's filming? Who has 'seen' and been thankful for all those people working in the background? Who has found peace at Compline, Wednesday or on Facebook? Who doesn't long to be back together? Who isn't grateful for signs of continued care amongst us (phone calls, cards, messages, sewing masks, giving food)? We are a community that has lived eucharistically together through these weeks. Thank you everyone!

May God's love bless, comfort and keep you,
Rev Helen.

Sr Warden's Corner



Dave Sevigny
Sr. Warden

I hope this finds you all rejoicing (at a safe distance) this Easter season. Pentecost (the birth of our church) is approaching and something tells me that there is a good chance that we may have a bit more of a collective celebration at St. Raphael's and churches in the area soon. Like a kid on Christmas morning, be patient, do not get your hopes up too high-the anticipation is sometimes more exciting than the gift of the experience itself.

Your vestry and rector have been having some discussions on how this might occur. We will adhere to the advice of our state and local health leaders, but please know that we are thinking about it. We have taken some steps in the last month to ensure our ability to survive this experience, and quite possibly, thrive on the way out of it. At the advice of both the diocese and area churches, we applied for and received one of the SBA Payroll Protection Program Loans. Non-profit religious organizations were eligible, and it was an opportunity for us to make sure that we could make good decisions over the next 6 months and keep financial stresses to a minimum. We expect that most of the loan will end up being a grant. Your continued generosity through this time has been remarkable. THANK YOU!

Spring is now in full swing. If you wanted to get involved in some outside work (easy to distance yourselves) at St. Raphael's, there is plenty to do. Kimberly Siahkoohi (siahkoohik@gmail.com) is heading up any gardening efforts while Martha Helen Smith is hunkered down in Florida. Please consider reaching out to her and offering your help. Other things that could be done are sorting of bottle caps...they keep coming! We are going to stop collecting these as we believe we have all we need to get the benches we want for the gardens. If you are interested in helping with that, let me know (thekydude@gmail.com).

We still have plans for a VBS at some point this summer. We feel that it might be a perfect storm for the event as parents have been enjoying their children a little too much over the last 30-45 days and will be looking for respite outlets for kid's energy.

I have been reading Acts for the Zoom bible study. I am reminded of a biblical people who thought that the return of Christ was just around the corner. They were making plans, selling their homes, giving everything to the newly formed church. As you move through the month of May, contemplate what this anticipation must have been like. I feel confident that we will be together again soon, enjoying a service and of course, the classic St. Raphael's "passing of the peace". Although I suggest the peace be celebrated a bit differently for a while-maybe doing a bit of a jig, or a line dance...or something rather fun, complete with the organ playing the chicken dance! See you all soon-

Easter blessings-
Dave Sevigny, Sr. Warden

2020 Vestry Members & Commission Members

Sr, Warden: **Dave Sevigny** Jr. Warden: **Mike Booth** Clerk: **Dana Berry** Treasurer: **Paula Sevigny**
Assistant Treasurer: **Roger Kirk**
Property – Nancy Christiano Chair. Members – Mike Booth, Mike Hart, Ken Cotrell, Jack Supplee, CC Johnson, & Roger Kirk
b. Christian Formation/Stewardship Chair – **Amy Fowler**, Members: Dana Berry, Dave Sevigny, **Amanda Vance**
c. Finance – Roger K Chair Members – Amanda Vance, Afsi Davis, Patty Bond, Paula Sevigny., Janis Rosebrook
d. Mission - Chair – **Afsi Davis**, Member: **Chris Young**, Margaret McLandry, Amanda Vance (dinner church food coordination)
e. Parish Life / Care – **Carol Summers** Chair; members – Chris Young, Dave Sevigny

Finance Corner

Roger Kirk, Finance Chair

The New Normal continues! Please lift your hearts in prayer to those affected, either by sickness or job loss or, heaven help us, death.

I want to thank all members of the Parish, as the end of March financials indicated that we are on track with your pledge dollars. Your continued support to the Parish of your pledges warms my heart and allows us to continue doing God's work in the best way we can, given the circumstances.

I have also seen many outside the box thinking donations for plate income coming into the church, since, as you may have noticed, there are no plates being passed recently or for the foreseeable future. And to boot, we have recorded several Easter specific donations (the Parish budgets for an Easter giving bump every year). Please continue to contribute to those as you are able. Lest we miss the point, our Parish, led by our Rector, is committed to tending to her flock. Many contingency plans have already been put into place. Operational funds are still needed.

Now, as your Finance Chair, but more importantly on this point, your faithful member, I want to say out loud what makes me sad in these times. As many of you know, Don and I are often ushers at the 11:00 service. I MISS doing that! Not for the income, I assure you. I MISS greeting people as they enter the church. I MISS speaking with members. I MISS sharing thoughts about the week or your work or your interest in (shocking I know) UK sports.

This Parish is resilient and like our Episcopal leaders, strong and mindful that we need to stay safe! And most importantly, strong in the Lord, as He has commanded us. One day, we ARE going to have a joyous reunion to celebrate our passion for the Lord and this Parish.

See you on Sundays—just not soon probably!

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 View from the Pew

ONLY LOVE CREATES: A new look on love, life and the healing power of humility

I just learned a lot from one of the best birthdays I have ever had. No cake? No party? No family dinner? No problem! What I had was love, lots of love. And gratitude for that love and all my blessings. It all became so much clearer during, and perhaps because of, the forced slowdown and isolation of the corona crises.

My day started with coffee, and a morning run and quick shower before court. Yes, we had court, via Zoom. Justice marches on, thanks to technology and the human spirit. Then there were a couple of phone conferences and other work---combined this “work” helps contribute to my PURPOSE in life, for which I am most grateful. I work from my home office anyway, so this is no change from before our Healthy at Home practice.



Richard
Dawahare

Interspersed were “Happy Birthday” calls from family, and breaks to check emails, news, and LinkedIn and Facebook, where oodles of birthday greetings poured in. So many of you wished me well that it touched my heart and lifted my soul.

I went out for a drive and a walk, then came home for a little more work, when I found a big beautifully wrapped present on my porch, a surprise gift from my brother!

I brought it in and beheld it, along with the unopened box I received a couple of days earlier that I knew was from my sister. Later, she brought me a kale quinoa blackened salmon salad from Malones, a birthday card AND balloons! She parked in my driveway and handed the items to me as we kept our distance. No hugs or kisses, but really, who needed them? In its place was a spirit of love felt all the more strongly in the absence of traditional shows of affection.

After eating my dinner, I opened my presents, took pictures of the balloons, the gifts and texted them to my family. It was grand!

I then spent the rest of the night answering every Facebook birthday greeting I received. My fingers got a little tired, but it was such a joy. Friends old and new wished me well. Liberals, conservatives, black, white, near, far, religious, secular—all with different veneers but all with the same ONE LOVE, identical in feeling and force.

Our lives are nothing if not to build. And only love builds. Only love creates. Love, and faith in a higher power. Love + faith = joy, courage, hope, confidence, and clarity. True faith means that we rest easy knowing our higher power is in control, no matter what. No matter who is president, no matter what little microbe menace inconveniences us, no matter what: God is in control and it all works to the good in the end.

But we also have a duty to truth and justice. This inevitably causes conflict with those of a different eye. Thus, humility is key—for you and for me. Humility heals. Humility pushes us to reconsider, to ask if our understanding is correct, and if not, to learn and accept a more accurate state of reality.

I pray for the highest truth, for the ready willingness to reject previous misperceptions, and for the courage to build on that truth. And I also pray for a winning way, to be less alienating and more effective. Recalling the spirit of love from this birthday will help.

Truly, only love creates.

Richard

On-Line Bible Study

Book Study - Acts

Rev. Helen invites all to listen, reread, meditate, or study a commentary about the Acts readings (from a Bible, book or commentary on Acts that you have at home or can read online.) You can go as lightly or deeply as you like.

Over the seven weeks of Easter through to Pentecost, the lectionary looks at:

Chapters 1- 4:23 in Week 1

Chapters 4:23 - 5 end in Week 2

Chapters 6,7,8 in Week 3

Chapters 9-13 in Week 4

Chapters 14-16 in Week 5

Chapters 17-18 in Week 6

Chapters 19-28 in Week 7

Sunday sermons will focus on the story of Acts of that week, and we can chat about the learning from Acts on a Sunday Zoom ‘coffee hour’ at 10 am.

You will receive login instructions for joining the Sunday Zoom sessions in a separate email each week.

Virtual Sunday School

We will continue with Sunday School readings and resources for kids each Sunday. Check for them at <https://srclex.org/for-children/> and on our Facebook page.

"Walk in Love" - preparation for Confirmation or Reception

Those interested in Confirmation or Reception should read ‘Walk in Love: Episcopal Beliefs and Practices’ by Scott Gunn and Melody Wilson Shobe. Study of this book and conversation with Rev Helen are part of the steps towards reception, confirmation or renewal of faith that Bishop Mark will bless in his visitation in September.

Announcements



Gardening Angels past and future!

Now would be an opportune time to get out your house while maintaining your social distance. The church grounds are bursting forth with growth and we need willing hands and healthy knees to participate in policing unwelcome invaders.

If you have questions, or need supplies, please let Kim know - siahkoohik@gmail.com



Mission Committee - St. Raphael Cookbook

Afsi Davis, chair

We are in the early stages of gathering recipes for a cookbook. We are asking for contributions for the following categories: Appetizers & Beverages, Soups & Salads, Vegetables & Side Dishes, Main Dishes, Bread & Rolls, Ethnic Cuisine, and Desserts. Please send all contributions to Afsi Davis afsileigh@gmail.com.



Parish Life/Pastoral Care Committee

Carol Summers, chair

Crafter's Circle mobilizing for mask making

Do you or a loved one need a fabric mask to wear when going out? The St. Raphael Crafters are making masks for those who need them. If you are in need of a mask,

please contact Dana Berry at danabruceberry@gmail.com or call 859-381-1830.

If you'd like to help with mask-making, you sew, and have supplies, there are a lot of different patterns for masks floating around the internet. Contact Dana for advice and to be added to the list to help with requests. If you don't sew but have fabric, thread, or other supplies to donate, the Crafters could use them. If you can cut out fabric for others to sew, that is helpful also. Contact Dana to work out the logistics. (The Crafters are working at their own homes and not gathering in person to make the masks.)

A Church Mouse in God's House



I understand that things have been rather tough for you in the human world these days, and I am very sorry to hear that. Lots of isolation, quarantine, at the best social distancing (I never even knew what that was!), things that you naturally social creatures just aren't accustomed to. Honestly, we mice aren't very accustomed to it either and it gets kind of lonely in the church sometimes. And we can be pretty social too, so I feel your pain.

My natural inclination is to ask if there is anything I can do to help. I mean, as far as I know my species isn't susceptible to your new virus so possibly we could bring things to you, keep you company, write witty newsletter articles or anything else that you can think of. But really, let's be honest. I think this is just gonna take time. And I know that that is something humans struggle with – you want things fixed, and you want them fixed right away. I understand, but it doesn't mean it will happen that way.

What I do know is that I have been amazed at the way you've been able to adapt to change. Both in what you worship and in the way you live your lives. Adaptability is one of those things that makes a species great, and I think you have proven that you have this characteristic. Frankly, in the past I have noticed that you can be very resistant to change. Of course those changes weren't the kind of things that need to take place in order to survive a global pandemic. But it proves that when you need to, you can.

I know it's not easy, but I do believe you can do it. As I keep hearing that one guy say, "We will get through this, and we will get through this together."



Up-Coming Events At St Raphael's



Saturday, May 9
6:00 p.m.

Post-Easter New Normal

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have heard a lot about the effects of social distancing on businesses, the workforce, and the healthcare system, but not as much about the people who are made more invisible and vulnerable by #healthyathome.

During this Dinner Church, Dr. Margaret McGladrey will provide an overview of how the pandemic is impacting low-income housing, food security, social services, mental health care, court systems, school-based child welfare, and the performing arts in our local community.

St. Raphael's Facebook Premiere will be posted with an interactive conversation with Dr. McGladrey afterwards!

Birthdays and Anniversaries

May Birthdays

Ron Binkauskas	May 1
Bill Price	May 3
Samantha Curci	May 5
Pal Dinsmore	May 5
Tom Vance	May 5
Lisa Booth	May 8
Hilda Fletcher	May 9
David Fowler	May 9
Brantly Jacobs	May 9
Lee Bourland	May 10
Marguerite Emmons	May 13
Peggy Oaks	May 13
Rose Canon	May 18
Bonnie Conaway	May 18
CC Johnson	May 21
Jackie Laborda	May 21
Lizzie Lorton	May 23
Logan Jacobs	May 24
Kayla Colliver	May 25
Rony Massaquoi	May 28
Emma Mathews	May 30
George Stevenson	May 30

Anniversaries for May

Beverly & Robert Bouse	May 26
Jennifer & Steve Krolak	May 28
Amanda & Tom Vance	May 29

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.

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Articles and news information for April must be submitted by **May 25, 2020** to Dana Berry at danabruceberry@gmail.com

Sunday Services - Current Schedule on Facebook Live

8:30 am Morning Prayer on line

Wednesday

12 Noon Morning Prayer

7:00pm Evening Prayer each night of the week