



## From the Rector

On March 15, St Raphael's, along with every Episcopal church in our diocese, Erika and I offered the first online Morning Prayer service of this pandemic. My cell phone and Facebook Live gave a blurry picture and irregular sound, but Junghyun's voice and Chris on the organ carried us through. Pew and media support was offered by Chris Bollinger and Amy Smereck on Sunday and for our Wednesday Healing Service. Three weeks later, Holy Week was upon us, and, with the help of Kevin and Afsi Davis, we gathered momentum and, quite amazingly, were able to offer a full week of worship and remembrance of Palm Sunday through to the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus through the lens of Kevin's camera.

That camera has produced some wonderful views and filming for us to remain connected in a new form of worship and prayer ever since then, though my cell camera does the 'live' services of Compline (almost) nightly and our midweek services. We have moved our 'film studio' outdoors to Tobit's Trace and our beautiful gardens at times, into my son's bedroom, my husband's office, our verandah and our dining room, my church office, our chapel, choir room and sanctuary. We have seen spring turn to summer back-drops to St George's day, Ascension, Rogation, Pentecost, and Trinity recorded in our filmed services, and enjoyed diocesan services which have given us a view of places and people around our diocese (as well as a chance to hear from our Bishop). And now we have begun stepping towards in-person services with our outdoor Eucharist service at 11am, following the continuing online Morning Prayer services premiered at 8.30 am and available on You Tube thereafter.



Rev. Canon Dr. Helen Van Koevering

In the meanwhile, ministry has continued even with restrictions on pastoral visiting and social distancing. There has been so much more focused prayer in the absence of bodies gathering together – we organized a buddy-type network to help make sure needs were still heard and, where needed, action taken in some shape or form. We have supported financially and in kind those who are struggling through unemployment and hardship during this time. We have joined in with a Zoom (on-line meeting software) coffee morning and Bible study of Acts during the Easter season and the work of Prison Fellowship since. Alongside way much more contact with clergy colleagues as we all figure this out together, we've seen the Zoom culture explode! Even vestry and finance meetings are Zoomed. I am grateful for the outside space at St Raphael's that has allowed for memorials to take place, notably for Hayley Morgan on June 28 and for Barbra Evans, as well as allow for outdoor meetings as needed too. Such a beautiful space to be!

And we have even managed to be involved in mission opportunities during this time too! Apart from supporting the Greater Gardenside and the Farmer's Market on Lane Allen again this summer, we have kept in touch with the actions of BUILD as they have continued to work inter-denominationally for issues of justice during this time. We have offered three 'virtual' dinner church evening when Margaret and I (with our film team!) have enjoyed learning from and collaborating with local organizations: Lament in our city in response to Covid 19, the Nest which cares for families in need, and looked at racism and the ex-incarcerated on Juneteenth. If you missed any, all of these can still be viewed on our Facebook page or on our YouTube page: 'St Raphael Lex'. Our next 'virtual dinner church' will be concerned with the work of CASA in Lexington and be premiered on Saturday July 25. Join us with a meal to listen and learn together.

I am so grateful for our team being willing to try different ways to include our parish children and families at this time too – from reading stories, to Godly Play, to home-based VBS. If you feel comfortable, and if you'd just like to catch up with friends, come along to our Family VBS days (July 4 & 11 from 11-1pm on the lawn) – bring your own picnic and watch a frontier enactment by Carol and Mike Summers!

For me, all of this has been part of a huge and ongoing learning curve, all has intended to connect us some how, and all has been weird & exciting, exhausting & rewarding – a wild ride! I agree with a friend that it is all 'twice the work doing stuff we are half as good at with almost none of the emotional and relational benefits coming back to us.' But God is with us always, and we have only been laying the foundation for doing church differently and distantly as we remain safe into the future. Please join in when you can! I look forward to 'seeing' you!

Helen

## Sr Warden's Corner



Dave Sevigny  
Sr. Warden

Summer has always been a time for respite and a time for taking a break from normal routines. The last few weeks our church has changed our routine. We've begun a very safe and intentional community Eucharist service outside, on the front lawn at 11 a.m. on Sundays. We'll be offering it each Sunday (with the exception of the last Sunday of the month in July and August-when the Diocese will be hosting a service to provide for respite for local clergy).

The last three Sundays of June, I have partaken in the experience. I don't recall ever having a complete service outside on our front lawn. It has been a wonderful experience for me. The past two Sundays we've had about 20 people join us in lawn chairs or blankets in the shade each week. There is easily room for all of us who want to attend on the front lawn at a safe distance, mostly all shaded. Everyone was wearing a mask, and the distances outside were safer than most my experiences at the grocery or picking up takeout. The birds are singing, the wind rustles the leaves in the trees, and God has blessed us with so many living natural wonders that you can experience while listening to his word in your lawn chair. Its peaceful, comfortable and safe. Even in the heat of the summer, the shade of the trees in front provide a blanket of respite from the sun. These trees that have been there for weekly services, baptisms, weddings and funerals that have taken place at St. Raphael's over the last 40-50 years. What a great place to connect again with other parishioners new and old in the nourishment of the Eucharist each Sunday.

I invite all who are comfortable in partaking to join us on Sunday's at 11 in person. The service is short, peaceful and comfortable. If you need help with your lawn chairs, there are always a few of us who can help. Its also a great time to invite a friend to join us. We ask that you signup online <https://srclex.org/worship/in-person-services/> so we can keep track of numbers and have a way to contact you if something happens that requires services to be canceled.

Hope to see those of you who are comfortable in July!

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

Message from the Finance Committee Chair July 2020:

Roger Kirk, Finance Chair

The New Normal changed a bit in the last couple of weeks! Congregants actually were engaged, socially and safely distanced, in short services at St. Raphael. This is the first tiny step in our battle with the Pandemic and we are all thankful to the Diocese and to the Parish for providing us some much needed time spent worshipping together.

I want to thank all members of the Parish, as the end of May financial's indicated that we remain 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. Please continue to contribute to other areas as you are able.

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—perhaps soon?

### 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

Black American Christians: the true keepers of the faith

Enough with the fiction that there's no difference between the races. At least as measured by the metrics of New Testament values and universal morality there is a difference. Black Americans have proven to better bear all things, better believe all things, better hope all things, and better ENDURE all things.

I've been going to church since the days of Howdy Doody. Bored with sermons beyond my comprehension yet too old for Crayola's, I'd put my newly acquired reading skills to use on the church program. This led to the first of many exposures to what I later learned were the Beatitudes (or BE-attitudes), Matthew 5:1-12: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

A few years later, as a semi-sentient sophomore at Lafayette, newly sensitized by bleeding, sweating, and tearing beside my black brothers on the football team, it struck me that no group better fit Jesus's Sermon on the Mount than the American black community. In our history, who most suffered, most mourned, and most hungered and thirsted for righteousness than American blacks? And who, by fighting for their rights, suffered persecution and lies—none worse than the evil lie of "black racism"—than American blacks?

Chained, tortured, and abused, American blacks nonetheless adopted the religion of their masters. And though falsely fed a white God with a white Jesus, American blacks feasted hungrily at the trough of righteousness, where the true essence of God and Jesus rocked their collective soul, fueled their quest for justice and set them free.

It is no wonder that all the great R&B artists got their start in church. Mahalia Jackson, Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, Al Green, Dionne Warwick--just to name a very few--they all found their voice singing their hearts out to Jesus.

The transcendent faith of my black brothers and sisters always gave me hope. For there was and is no better proof of the power and truth of Jesus's message than their sure-footed walk.

Martin Luther King Jr. reflected their never-say-die resolve in his many sermons. Perhaps none more powerful than his address to the first Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) Mass Meeting, at Holt Street Baptist Church, Dec. 5, 1955: "You know my friends, there comes a time when people get tired of being trampled by the iron feet of oppression... If we are wrong, the Supreme Court of this nation is wrong. If we are wrong, the Constitution of the United States is wrong. And if we are wrong, God Almighty is wrong. If we are wrong, Jesus of Nazareth was merely a utopian dreamer that never came down to Earth. If we are wrong, justice is a lie, love has no meaning. And we are determined here in Montgomery to work and fight until justice runs down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream."

Crucially, "their fight" has now become "OUR fight." Recent events have finally and forever opened our collective conscious to the truth. More whites than ever now see what they see and feel what they feel. Basic human compassion and, dare I say, the love of Jesus, have irreversibly stiffened our resolve to truly create a more perfect union with liberty and justice for ALL.

Red and yellow, black, and white, ALL are precious in His sight.



Richard Dawahare

## Announcements

MODIFIED RITE II SERVICE

Sunday, July 5, 2020

11:00 A.M.

MORE DETAILS + RESERVE YOUR FREE TICKET AT  
SRECLEX.ORG/IN-PERSON-SERVICES

Sundays, July 5, 12, & 19, 11:00

Register for tickets on St. Raphael's website. For an idea of numbers attending, and ensure for space to keep groups safely and socially distant, we are using a ticketing system. Tickets are free of charge. One ticket is required per household group which will be sitting together. If your plans change and you decide you won't attend, please modify your order using the link in the ticketing email, or contact the church office at [sroffice@sreclx.org](mailto:sroffice@sreclx.org). Each person attending should please bring their own mask and wear it, covering nose and mouth, as per current public health guidelines. Masks will not be provided. Individuals/groups who don't live together will sit socially distanced (6 feet apart). Please bring your own folding lawn-type chair if you can. If you have your own Book of Common Prayer, you are welcome to bring it. We will have a limited number of laminated Orders of Service which will be sanitized between services. Please note: There is no need to print your tickets! We will have a record of your ticket info at the service.



Saturday, July 25, 6:00

For our final virtual Dinner Church with the 2020 theme of "Healing and Justice for Families," Dr. Margaret McGladrey and Rev. Canon Dr. Helen Van Koevinger will offer communal prayers, a Bible study, and a conversation with Melynda Jamison, Executive Director of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Lexington, a local non-profit organization that trains and guides community volunteers to advocate in the family court system for the best interests of children and youth experiencing abuse and neglect. This virtual gathering over dinner will conclude with information about what we can do to support this vital work, with God's help. Please tune into the St. Raphael Facebook page for the premiere closer to the date.

### "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.

### 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 Siahkoohi know - [siahkoohik@gmail.com](mailto:siahkoohik@gmail.com)





Sunday, July 19, 12:00-1:00

St. Raphael's Parking Lot (bring your own lawn chairs and lunches!)

Let's take some time together to reflect on who and how we are amid all of the upheavals and changes of the past six months! This conversation will kick-off a six-week process of self-understanding and connection using the Living Compass Adult Wellness Circles program that creates space for having open, authentic conversations about the important things that are happening in our lives in terms of our hearts, minds, strength, souls, and social responsibility. Although the next five sessions of the Wellness Circles will be for adults only, children and youth are more than welcome to participate in the kick-off event.



**St. Raphael Episcopal Church**  
*A Congregational Time for Reflection*

Sunday, July 19, 12:00-1:00



Given the success of our diocese-wide St. George's Day and Pentecost online celebrations, DioLex has scheduled two more diocesan-led worship services to be offered on July 26 and August 30, the last Sunday of each month through the summer. The Sunday worship services will be posted on the St. Raphael Facebook page.

**Vacation Bible School**

Our St. Raphael 2020 Vacation Bible School is based on requiring some continued social distancing and protective measures. We have copies of a home-based VBS program called 'Compassion' that will be available for families and grandparents of 6-13 ages. Please let us know if you would like a copy and we shall send it by email.

**Family Days**

Saturdays, July 4 & 11, 11:00-1:00

The Summers will provide a Frontier enactment for us at 11:45. People can come for as long as they please, bring their own food, drink, and camp chairs. The main purpose is for us, even with physical distancing in place, to visit with each other after such a long time apart!

*A Church Mouse in God's House*



How do you even wear these things? The protective face masks I mean. I thought our species would have an inherent advantage with the big ears, but I've yanked out several whiskers, nearly lost an eye and just about suffocated so far. And I was just doing so to be in solidarity with you – I can't even spread the disease!

I don't imagine it's easy for you either. And here's what I've learned that really impresses me: the mask doesn't even do that much good for the human wearing it, but for the other humans they come in contact with. So really, you're choosing to do something that isn't very pleasant for you in order to help others. I take back all the

times I thought you were self-centered jerks.

In the mouse world we generally act in our self interest. But it's a little bit different I think. Our self interest is dependent on working together. If it's a cold night I'm going to use some other mouse's body heat to stay warm even if I don't like them. If we see a gigantic block of cheese and the only way to get it is to work together, we'll do it even if it means sharing the cheese.

Maybe this is how you decide to wear masks... everybody working together for the overall good. But as for us it's instinct, for you it seems like a conscious choice. And you don't all make it, which maybe means some of your kind don't care about others or aren't willing to make a small sacrifice. Or maybe some just don't believe it works. I don't know.

But when I see you, the ones I know at least, taking these steps to protect each other it fills my little heart up with hope for you humans.



*Birthdays and Anniversaries*

July Birthdays

Patrick Peterson	July 3
Ian Rainey	July 5
Diana Trapp	July 6
Bernice Wood	July 10
Michael Curci	July 11
Jake Van Koevering	July 13
Rose Conley	July 15
Jack Cochran	July 17
Joan Schmidt	July 21
Lora Kay Carter	July 22
Carole Mize	July 22
Ron Vittitoe	July 22
Anna Peterson	July 23
Amy Smereck	July 25
Olivia Vance	July 25
Sam Lorton	July 31

Anniversaries for July

Chris Bollinger & Amy Smereck July 8

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](mailto:danabruceberry@gmail.com)) or the parish office.



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Articles and news information for July must be submitted by **Aug. 24, 2020** to Dana Berry at [danabruceberry@gmail.com](mailto:danabruceberry@gmail.com)

**Services - Current Schedule**

**Sunday**

**IN PERSON July 5, 12 & 19 (weather permitting) :**  
**11:00 AM Shortened Eucharist Service**  
**on the Front Lawn of the Church.**



**Register to attend on line. Bring your own lawn chair**

**ONLINE:**

**8:30am Morning Prayer - Facebook and YouTube**

**Wednesday**

**12:00pm Morning Prayer - Facebook**

**Nightly**

**7:00pm Evening Prayer - Facebook**