



## From Our Rector & Deacon

As I write this, we are in the dead of winter, with snowfall forecast for tonight. Have you noticed how snow isn't just beautiful as it carpets all we see in white, but offers a reminder of the Christmas spirit as well as providing a fun family playground? Yes, certainly if we're looking out from safe, heated homes, wearing cozy clothes and warming our hands with a hot drink – not so much if we aren't. I'm glad that we have been able to help our neighbors during this season too, especially through a neighborhood initiative on the porch of 1603 Versailles Rd where they have begun a Little Food Pantry, and we have contributed through our 'Reverse Advent' contributions (as we can do again with our Lent Pantry Appeal too).



Rev. Canon Dr. Helen Van Koevering

Whoever we are, whoever we meet, wherever we are, whatever the weather and the season, Epiphany and January 2021 opened our eyes to looking for and recognizing the Light in signs of hope, peace, joy and love (what we prayed for with our wreath in Advent). Our parish Epiphany book, 'Dwelling in the Light', gave us meditations on icons of Christ. Rowan Williams concludes that, '[in these icons] we find ourselves looking at far more than just the representation of a human being of long ago. We are brought into the presence of one who contains everything, who makes everything hang together, who gives us the power to see all things freshly. We began by recalling the worries of those who couldn't see how you could possibly depict God, especially not in the depiction of a human face. But the Church concluded that this human face, showing a life that was completely the gift of God to us for our healing and forgiveness, would show us God (2 Cor 4:6 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ')...it shows God taking us on a journey in which we discover what the relations are that have been created between us and Jesus; and as we begin to grasp what these are and what they imply, what they require of us and what they make possible for us, it is God that 'appears' as the context and the boundary of all we are thinking and saying and experiencing....directly and simply in the face of Jesus.' (p. 83-84)

Prayer is a gift for our healing and forgiveness 'in the face of Jesus Christ'. Our Spiritual Inventory last year encouraged us to look towards spiritual development, and a foundation of prayer is vital for that. Which is why we are offering you a few different ways to pray, first with icons and now in your Lenten packet, coming to you shortly. This strange time of being a church outside the building is a good time to discover different ways 'in the face of Jesus Christ'. God holds us in the palm of God's hand, is with us even in the furthest parts of the world (and beyond – I have a friend whose daughter is an astronaut and confidently speaks of God with her, even 200 miles above the earth!). God welcomes us to new insight, new ways, new angles of view of 'the face of God.' We might just be surprised by God's light in ways and places we hadn't yet discovered.

We aim to offer three services (7.30am, midday and 6.30pm) on Ash Wednesday, and hope to offer multiple services on Easter Sunday, following the guidelines for Covid safety and the progress of vaccinations then. Keep your eye on our Eminders as you pray for one another in these times!

With love, Helen



The Episcopal Church has a wonderful tradition that we share with many other Christian communities—we read through the story Scripture bit by bit each Sunday. This allows us to experience the grand, dramatic arc of the Bible each year. If we open ourselves to the Spirit's leading, this practice can shape our lives and make us more loving, just and faithful people.

Deacon Charles

It also has a weakness, as all good thing do. Splitting the Bible's stories into small chunks means that we often read them outside of their normal contexts and miss out on some of the subtleties these contexts provide. And, the repetitious cycle of readings has the potential for Scripture's stories to become too familiar and domesticated. We no longer detect their wildness.

I'm currently reading George Saunder's new book, *A Swim in a Pond in the Rain: In Which Four Russians Give a Master Class on Writing, Reading, and Life*. He makes a statement in there about Russian short stories that, I think, also applies to the Bible. It hit me with force when my eyes first ran over it, and I've been coming back to it again and again since. I'll leave it here with you in hopes that it gives you a renewed sense of gratitude for the Bible and maybe even some motivation to dig into its stories again for the first time:

"Once we begin reading the stories, which are, for the most part, quiet, domestic, and apolitical, this idea may strike you as strange; but this is a resistance literature, written by progressive reformers in a repressive culture, under constant threat of censorship, in a time when a writer's politics could lead to exile, imprisonment, and execution. The resistance in the stories is quiet, at a slant, and comes from perhaps the most radical idea of all: that every human being is worthy of attention and that the origins of every good and evil capability of the universe may be found by observing a single, even very humble, person and the turnings of his or her mind" (page, 4).

## Senior Warden's Corner



Dave Sevigny  
Sr. Warden

Sr. Warden Corner

Wait for it

Feb 2021

Today was a pretty winter day as the temp climbed up to 50 degrees. Paula and I typically travel in Feb to warmer weather and a break from the dreary days of winter. We generally are someplace else on Fat Tuesday and Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. This year, we put aside those plans as we wait for the vaccine. We realize we could go someplace, but still feel like we aren't ready to chance getting sick when our vaccine times are so close. So, we wait. Paula is scheduled for her first dose in a few days, but I'm a bit farther down the pecking order. The vaccine provides the possibility of a hopeful triumph over a horrible ending.

Waiting. Seems like there has been a lot of that over the last 12 months. Lent begins its somber season of waiting in a few weeks. Each year, we go through this season knowing how it ends. Jesus knew how it was going to end. He tried to prepare his friends, but even they didn't comprehend what was about to happen. So we wait through this season of Lent for a very painful week that ends with a Christ's victory over death.

Many of us will get vaccinated this Lent as we hope for new life and broadened experiences in public with friends and family. Try to spend a bit more time waiting this Lent getting ready for new life. The new life that Christ's sacrifice provided for us. We know how the wait ends. Be patient and calm. Be prayerful. We will get there together.

Peace-

Dave Sevigny  
Sr. Warden

## A View from the Pew

Living the New Testament in an Old Testament World

Through all the seriousness of the past year my mind kept returning to children and the carefree innocence of childhood. I asked myself, what if I were a child, would I be worked up over politics, would I be worried about a pandemic, would I be constantly praying to God? Or would I be as the 8 year old boy on the day JFK was shot, playing with my friend in the front lawn of our little house on Alexandria during a cold misty November day, each of us shouting "Spy, spy!" as we mocked falling down after taking a hit from the imaginary bullet launcher fired from the fiendish enemy? I am sure it would be the latter. But I just don't remember if I constantly conversed with God back then beyond nightly bedtime prayers.



Richard Dawahare

That led me to the question of what was important to God, both then and now. What is God's will? What should I do, what should I be? What is wholly holy?

Then immediately I harkened back to children and that Jesus taught we must be as a child to enter the kingdom of heaven. That truth alone is nearly as revolutionary as "love your enemy." So important was the importance of having a childlike faith in God that it appears in three of the four gospels, with only the too-serious John omitting any mention of children in this context. Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me" MT 18:2-5; "Whoever receives one child like this in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me does not receive Me, but Him who sent Me." MK 9:36-37; But Jesus, knowing what they were thinking in their heart, took a child and stood him by His side, and said to them, "Whoever receives this child in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me; for the one who is least among all of you, this is the one who is great." LK 9:47-48.

Humility, innocence, pure love for all [until that is, the prejudices and flawed world-views of "adults" pollute their minds—in today's parlance, their software, their operating systems, but which often have little ill effect until they (we) too become "adults". But that's another story, stay on topic Richard!].

Then my mind raced back to the childhood books of Jesus. The pastel-colored scenes of Jesus with the children, Jesus with the lambs, Jesus with his followers. So pretty. And then there were the other biblical stories in pretty pictures too. There was sweet Davey and the Lamb, a curly haired youthful Davey, with a little lamb draped across the back of his neck, her trustful contented head and front legs on Davey's right shoulder, and fleecy white rear legs on Davey's left.

Then, listening to Joel Osteen on Sirius while driving—Joel is one of the most positive, hope-inspiring Bible-based people around—I heard him talking about staying in faith, staying humble, positive, and doing the right thing with the right attitude all the time and how Davey had to be patient and do just that until his "time" had arrived and that time was when he took his slingshot and killed Goliath. Then led his armies to kill many of "the enemy." Davey was Davey no more, but now David. And like today's modern Holy Warriors, a killer and leader of killers. Old Testament then; Old Testament in a New Testament World now.

And as we know, the pure innocence of Davey was swamped by David's own foibles as an adult. Of course, we know too that the childhood goodness remained, for David repented, made amends and stayed true to God. He wrote many of the Psalms, words that will live for eternity.

Yet I do note the disparity. Old Testament values kept so many humans down and were used to justify the slaughter of so many innocents, both then and now. Children, women, men wiped out in the name of creating holy ground for Israelites then, Manifest Destiny in American's founding two centuries ago, and making the world Safe for Democracy in the last century into this one. Old Testament values dehumanized or otherwise devalued (LGBT, the mentally ill), enshrined slavery and allowed the abuse of those subject to it (see Exodus 20:17 "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's" and Exodus 21:20-21 "And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand; he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his money [property])." Alas, it is ever so still today.

Ahh, but then came Jesus and the New Testament. An idyllic world, or maybe just the hope of it—truth, love, mercy, compassion, humility, and justice. A sharing of the wealth and not just financial wealth, but also moral wealth, spiritual wealth, communal wealth. No more wars, no more mistreatment of others, love ALL, do good for ALL, without fear or favor. This is what true followers of Jesus must in my understanding do and daily promote the best we can. And many do, it is a work in progress. One of God's days is like a million of ours and the earth is billions of years old so it may be that yes, we are inching forward.

But for now, Old Testament Values rule our hoped-for New Testament World.

### Special Study for Lent: 5 Spiritual Exercises An Online Study

In support of the diocesan vision to Be the Church, Be the Change, the Diocese of Lexington is offering a digital formation course that introduces 5 spiritual exercises that have helped Christians throughout the ages cultivate a more joyful and life-giving relationship with God and neighbor. This formation opportunity is designed for anyone who is interested in cultivating their spiritual life, from people brand new to Christianity to cradle Episcopalians.

This course contains five documentary-style short films of around 8-10 minutes in length in which parishioners and clergy from Newport to Prestonsburg talk about how the themes of prayer, gratitude, service, study and sharing help them feel God's presence more deeply and love their neighbors more faithfully.

The course will also have a participant guide with discussion questions that go along with each theme. The guide will help small groups reflect on the themes after they view each of the films.

There are two ways that you and your community can use this course: 1) you can facilitate your own class using the course materials including the films and the study guide that will be archived on the diolink.org website and available for anyone to use and download any time free of charge. For instance, I will offer the class to St. Raphael's via Zoom on Sunday mornings before the 11am service. 2) Your community can join the diocesan-hosted Zoom-based class this Lent on five Monday nights February 22 - March 22 from 7-8pm. We will create breakout rooms for communities of faith that have at least four participants registered so communities can engage in their own discussion groups. People can register for this class at this link: <https://bit.ly/2Y5Z9SQ>.

If you would like to advertise this formation opportunity in your communications with your community, here is a sample blurb that you are welcome to use or adapt:

Would you like to feel God's presence more deeply? The Diocese of Lexington will offer a Zoom-based course that will introduce 5 ancient spiritual exercises that have helped Christians cultivate a more joyful and life-giving relationship with God and neighbor. The class will meet for five Monday nights in Lent February 22 - March 22 from 7-9pm. Join us by registering with this link: <https://bit.ly/2Y5Z9SQ>

You can also preview one of the films included in the course HERE. You will need to enter this code to access the preview: **aFz1jgSs**. The entire course including all materials will be available at <https://diolink.org/diolex/index.php/5-spiritual-exercises/> beginning February 17. All materials will be archived so if you would like to offer this class multiple times throughout the year or beyond, you are welcome to do so.

If you have any questions or want more information please contact me at [formation@diolink.org](mailto:formation@diolink.org) or 513-377-1624. I am happy to help you any way I can.

The Rev. Dcn. Charles Halton, PhD



## A Church Mouse in God's House



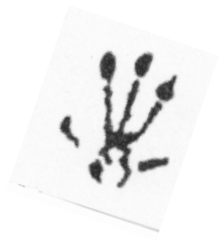
So, I watched that new guy that you elected become president the other week, and of course I watched the last guy leave. As I watched him leave it made me realize something: you humans are not very good at losing. Okay, I know I'm generalizing here, but let's just say that especially for being on the international stage that was not a graceful exit.

I thought for a moment that maybe humanity just wasn't very good at losing. I mean, let's face it, as a species you pretty much dominate the entire world. But I don't really think that's the case. I think in many ways you really are obsessed with having winners and losers. And you're not historically very kind to the losers. Sure, you pay them lip service ("they fought hard!", or "they were dealt a tough hand"), but how often do you really train people to lose well and support them when they do?

We mice are some of the world's best losers. We are always missing out on things, scurrying about when the least bit of fear sets in, and quite honestly, we don't have a lot of aspirations towards greatness. But I will tell you this: we support each other when we lose. Nobody goes hungry unless we all are hungry. If anyone is in pain, we are all there for them. I have heard you all talk about survival of the fittest, but what we realized a long time ago is that individually none of us are "fit." However, as a group we can survive.

I know that as a parish you are always looking for new ideas for things to study. So, I'm just throwing this out there, but I would like to volunteer to teach you all how to be better losers. We could cover several topics. First, we can get rid of this ridiculous practice of giving out "participation trophies" so that you can just learn to fail the old-fashioned way. Similarly, we could do a session on de-stigmatizing the act of losing. And third, we could talk about how to support each other when we lose. Honestly, I think it would do your species a lot of good.

And, in the meantime you can prepare by watching your basketball team!



## Announcements & Upcoming Events

### Please continue to support St. Raphael Episcopal Church.

Introducing a new online giving portal in 2021 - Engage

St. Raphael Church has a new online giving portal called Engage. This portal will replace our Virtual Collection Plate with Square. Engage Online Giving allows you to create one-time and recurring gifts from any computer or mobile device. Users can view and give to a full list of all giving funds. You can set up multiple credit cards, debit cards, or ACH checking accounts. Users can also update their own data (addresses, family members and even upload a picture). Users can view their giving history (includes giving in previous years not given through Engage).

To access Engage and setup your user account, please go to <https://engage.suran.com/sreclx>

You can also access this page via the menu on our website at [sreclx.org](http://sreclx.org).

### Plans for Lent

The season of Lent is fast approaching, a time of penitence and reflection leading us to Holy Week. To encourage your Lenten journey this year, we will be sending out Lenten materials over the next two weeks which will include:

1. Prayers and materials, including some ashes, for your use on Ash Wednesday as you stay safe at home. We are planning to have in-person and live-streamed services on that day at 7.30 am, midday and 6.30 pm when we shall also use ashes, and hope that you will join us online or in person depending on our 'red county' status at that time. Watch for news via eminders closer to the time.
2. Anglican prayer beads and prayers to use those beads on Fridays during Lent. In our recent parish spiritual inventory, we heard of the desire to grow spiritually and we are focusing on some different ways of developing our prayer lives in this first part of 2021. During Epiphany, we looked at praying with icons like the ones we have in St Raphael's. Now, during Lent, we shall practice the tactile aid to prayer that are Anglican prayer beads. Instructions are also included in the packet, and we shall follow this form of prayer together on Fridays in Lent at 11am on Facebook. Some, who are already used to praying in this way, might want to purchase this Lent devotional that uses beads to pray daily, with Scriptures.
3. For families, and for any who enjoy coloring (another great aid to meditational prayer!), there are also materials to focus on the Stations of the Cross every Friday in Lent and Good Friday in Holy Week. You might like to color all of these designs to create your own Stations at home.

We will be focusing on the Stations of the Cross in a variety of formats each Friday during Lent, and Deacon Charles and I will be offering a recorded series of Stations from various locations around Lexington on those Fridays at midday. More details will follow.

4. As a reminder that Lent is a time to fast and respond to the needy in our community, our Lent packet also includes a Lent Appeal list to replenish our Angel Pantry. We have distributed the food donated during Advent to the homeless, and there are so many needy in these days. Please bring your contributions to church during office hours (10am-2pm Monday to Thursday).

5. There are also a couple of helpful, fun charts to help you think about your Lenten discipline this year that doesn't involve giving up chocolate! Enjoy!

## ST. RAPHAEL EPISCOPAL IS GOING GREEN TO HELP END INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE!

Join us for Green Dot Bystander Training  
You'll learn:

1. To recognize signs/harmful behaviors of abuse (Red Dots)
2. To identify and overcome barriers to prevention
3. How to safely intervene using the 3Ds of Prevention

Saturday, Feb. 6 at 10am -11:30am  
via Zoom

To register: [bit.ly/SREGreenDot](https://bit.ly/SREGreenDot)

Participants will receive: Green Dot Bystander  
Certification and Swag!



Small actions  
for a safer city

For more info: [lexingtonky.gov/greendot](http://lexingtonky.gov/greendot)



# February Birthdays and Anniversaries

## Birthdays

Thomas Bollinger	Feb 2	Sandra Keller	Feb 22
Joseph Hayse	Feb 2	Kimberley Siahkoohi	Feb 23
Mark Matics	Feb 2	Diane Whorley	Feb 23
Mike Hart	Feb 3	Bill Emrick	Feb 25
Hunter Mathews	Feb 4	Lucie England	Feb 25
Kim Lorton	Feb 5	John-Michael Lorton	Feb 28
Ray Davis	Feb 8	Barbara Connell	Feb 29
Jodell Massaquoi	Feb 14		
Jennifer Krolak	Feb 15		
Lee Davis	Feb 17		
Nazanin Davis	Feb 21		
Marthanne Manion	Feb 21		

## Anniversaries

John-Michael & Kim Lorton Feb 12

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.

## Prayer Requests:

Long term prayer list: Art, Jack, Laura, Hilda, Lee, Mary Jane, Paul, Roy, Joan, Martha-Helen & Al, Pat Dinsmore, Steve & Ginger, Rose, Sonya, Don & Gail, Bill, Paula

Currently in need of prayer: Kenneth, Vicki, Seth, Sue, Tommy, Stephen, Noah, Maggie, the Fowler family, Carl, Gail, Annette

Recently deceased: Mary Elizabeth "Libby" Larkin, Lovell Larkin's mother. David Monk.

## Services - Current Schedule

### Sunday Services

Virtual Worship on Facebook & You Tube

11:00 a.m. Rite II

Each week the Wednesday Noon Healing Service will be published to the Facebook Page.

Compline services

Deacon Charles and Rev. Helen will lead on alternate Sundays, Sister Becky Cooper and Rose Canon alternate Tuesdays, Erika Mayers and Diane Whorley will alternate on Fridays. Find the livestreams on our Facebook Page.



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Articles and news information for Feb. must be submitted by **Feb. 22, 2021** to Dana Berry at [danabruceberry@gmail.com](mailto:danabruceberry@gmail.com)

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