



## *From Our Rector (continued)*

identity and purpose in the changing cultural context of our world, our families, and communities. The connection offers new perspective and questions: not so much Church-focused questions like 'how do we get people to come to our services?', but God-focused questions like 'what might God be up to in our community?' Our recent Word Cloud suggests to me that we are a community open and learning to be led by God.

In the Pentecost season, we learn that the church, the Body of Christ, is the bearer of God's mission of transforming hope to and for the world, **and** that the gospel connects Jesus, the church and what keeps us all up at night. The gospel of Jesus offers a distinct contribution to people's lives today, speaking to what our hearts and lives need to hear just as ever\*:

1. The world is good **and** broken
2. Life is communal
3. It is not all up to you
4. You're not alone in your suffering
5. Human flourishing is found in unconditional love and sacrificial service
6. Your past doesn't define your future

The gospel of Jesus, heard, seen and known amongst us when gathered together, is the reason to invite everyone we know to our church!  
With love and see you soon!

### **Rev Helen**

*\*Grateful for chats with a good friend over a new book, LEADING FAITHFUL INNOVATION by D Zscheile, M Binder, T Pinkstaff (2023).*

## *Senior Warden's Corner*

### **It's a new season at St. Raphael's!**

The new academic year is here. Summer vacations are winding down, and more of us will be at church on Sundays. Several St. Raphael offerings are starting up again! It's a great time to recommit to getting out of your jammies on Sunday mornings and joining in-person worship!



*Amy Smereck*

**Children's Chapel** starts August 27 at 11 am. This curriculum promotes a reverence of the worship space and hearing and wondering about the stories of our faith in a way that is engaging and memorable. Students are encouraged to think about what they are hearing and to bring their whole selves, brain and all, to church, just as in "big church" upstairs.

## Senior Warden's Corner (continued)

The St. Raphael **Choir** will resume September 3 at the 11 am service. Though we've had organ music and a cantor or two at 11am services through the summer, I'm excited for the harmonies and fuller sound that the choir brings. Worshipers are always encouraged to sing the hymns each Sunday. If you are interested in joining the choir contact Clif Cason. Rehearsals start August 31.

We are celebrating the change of seasons with an **End of Summer Festival on Saturday, August 26 from 3 to 7 pm**. We'll have outdoor games for all ages, including a corn hole tournament, Curious about Godly Play? There will be a Godly Play demonstration. Kids can take part in cookie decorating and enjoy the bouncy castle.

Bring books to our Book Swap table and take some home. Interested in getting more involved at St. Raphael? There will be a special booth presenting available volunteer opportunities. Maybe you will find an activity which calls to you, one that will enable you to deepen your faith, meet new people, help in the community, or all three.

We are inviting arts and crafts vendors to set up booths for your perusal. Festival attendees can win door prizes and enter for chances to win a variety of gift baskets. A festival wouldn't be complete without food! Burgers, veggie burgers, hot dogs will be provided. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.

Please invite friends and neighbors to the End of Summer Festival! If you know interested vendors or can donate or solicit door prizes or gift basket items contact Nancy Christiano at [nancy.christiano@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.christiano@gmail.com). If you are available to help that day or have books to donate contact [Amy Smereck](mailto:amy.smereck@gmail.com) at [amy.smereck@gmail.com](mailto:amy.smereck@gmail.com).

—Amy

**END OF SUMMER  
FESTIVAL**

**SATURDAY  
AUGUST 26  
3 - 7 PM**

- Outdoor games for all ages
- Corn hole tournament
- Godly Play demonstration
- Cookie decorating
- Bouncy castle
- Book swap
- Vendor booths
- Door prizes
- Gift basket raffle

Burgers, veggie burgers, hot dogs provided  
Bring a side dish or dessert to share

**ST. RAPHAEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
1891 PARKERS MILL RD LEXINGTON      SRECLEX.ORG

## *From the Junior Warden*

You may have noticed the fruits of several building and grounds projects which were completed in June. A new roof was installed with insurance funds after damage from Spring hail and windstorms. New landscaping was installed both at the Columbarium with funds in the landscaping and memorial funds, and on the east side of the building (behind the playground) through a generous gift from our neighbor, Mr. Stephen Webb. Finally, our playground equipment was repaired by Mike Booth and is now ready for the Festival on August 26<sup>th</sup>. Yay!!



*Laurie Daugherty*

### **Update on New Air-conditioning**

Five (yes, five!) new air-conditioning units were installed to replace units dating back to 1989 and 1990, at a total cost of \$38,825. This was two more than planned for this year, but the replacements had to be made. The capital improvement fund balance was insufficient to cover all these units. Many thanks and blessings to those who graciously contributed to the fund in July. Around \$4,400 was received. As of the end of July, the balance in that fund is still negative by around -\$2,250. Please prayerfully consider making a special contribution toward the A/C units. Any amount is appreciated! Be sure to earmark your donation for the "Capital Improvement Fund."

—Laurie



### **Please continue to support St. Raphael's.**

We use Engage for online giving. To access Engage and setup your user account, please [click here](#).

You can also access Online Giving via the menu on our website at [sreclex.org](http://sreclex.org).

## Music-Alive and Live

Many of you know that I taught Hymnology and Church Music courses at the Lexington Theological Seminary when it was located on South Limestone. Hymnody has always fascinated me. I remember attending a youth summer camp and one of the classes offered was a session on hymns. While that sounds like a boring topic to most people, I enjoyed learning about lyricists, composers, meters, hymn tune names and hymn book indices.



Clif Cason

I could go on and on about my love of hymns, the theological interpretation of the texts, the beauty of Psalms and Scripture paraphrases which began with Isaac Watts, the number of hymns written by Charles Wesley which total over 6,500, the Oxford Movement in England that introduced hymns to us from as early as the seventh century, or contemporary lyricists such as Brian Wren, Fred Pratt Green and Dudley Buck. That represents a very small list of topics you might not have known about before this article.

This leads me to explain why we have a third hymnal in our pews, one that comes from the Presbyterian Church USA denomination. We have the 1982 Episcopal Hymn (1982 Hymnal) and Lift Every Voice and Sing II (LEVAS II). Why do we need a third hymnal? The new hymnal, which has *Soli Deo Gloria* ("Glory to God") on the front cover along with our church's name, provides new hymns not found in the 1982 hymnal nor LEVAS II. You will also find hundreds of hymns that appear in all three.

One of the features I appreciate most about the Presbyterian hymnal is its inclusiveness. While most of the hymns still refer to God as "Father" or "King" or "He," there are several which use inclusive language encompassing the wide range of who or what God is. It also contains over a dozen hymns from Hispanic, Latino, and Asian heritages.

What led me down the path to acquiring the Presbyterian Hymnal was the survey I took earlier this year asking members of St. Raphael's to share with me their three favorite hymns. Some responses asked for hymns not found in the 1982 Hymnal or LEVAS II but are found in the Presbyterian hymnal. What that survey showed is that this congregation is a mix of life-long Episcopalians, Baptists, Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, and more. The Presbyterian hymnal is not heresy to the Episcopal church. You will not find texts that explicitly or even remotely refer to John Calvin's idea of predestination. What you will find are familiar hymns along with some new ones.

You may ask where the funds came from to purchase the Presbyterian hymnals. 100 copies were given to St. Raphael's by First Presbyterian Church located on Mill St. The only cost to us was for the vinyl covers which were paid for out of the Music budget. There were conversations about purchasing *Wonder, Love and Praise*, a third hymnal published by the Episcopal Church. The current price for that hymnal is \$30 per copy. The cost of vinyl covers for the Presbyterian hymnal was a fraction of the cost.

The Presbyterian hymnal is not an attempt to “convert” anyone. It is simply a way to diversify our hymnody. It does not replace LEVAS II or the 1982 Hymnal. Those two will always be the main resources for our hymns on Sunday morning. If, however, there is a hymn or two that gives us the opportunity to sing about God using inclusive language or sing hymns from the Hispanic, Latino or Asian communities, then don’t be surprised to see the black vinyl hymnbook in the pews from time to time. And to keep confusion to a minimum, when we use hymns from any of the three, the hymnal selected will be the only one used on that Sunday. There will never be a juggling act between the three.

I encourage you to look at the list of titles in the back of the Presbyterian Hymnal to see how many hymns you already know. I think you will be pleasantly surprised.

—Clif

## *Children's Ministry*

Children’s Chapel this month is on hiatus, and will resume on Sunday, August 27 – the Sunday after the church’s big extravaganza on Saturday, August 26.

The teachers are taking a well-deserved break and will be fresh and ready to start our new year off with a bang. As most of you know, we use the Godly Play curriculum. They have updated the stories and materials. That means some of our Godly Play “boxes” are no longer in the curriculum. In August we will identify those boxes that need to be set aside (to be used as supplementary materials) and put together new boxes from our wealth of extra Godly Play pieces.

The new curriculum has stories about Saints, such as Ruth, who will be our starting story when we begin in August.

Our new lessons include:

- The Story of Abraham
- The Story of Esther
- The Story of Job
- The Story of the Prophet Daniel
- The Story of the Prophet Ezekiel
- The Story of the Prophet Jeremiah
- The Story of the Prophet Isaiah
- The Story of the Prophet Elijah
- The Story of Sarah



- The Story of David
- The Story of Ruth
- The Story of Samuel
- The Story of Moses
- The Story of Joseph
- The Story of Jacob

If you have some extra time this August, we need help making up the new boxes. Give Janis Rosebrook (626) 389-7474) or Diane Whorley (859) 224-4762) a call to let us know how you can help.

—Janis

## *A View from the Pew*

A few short steps beyond the door on the choir side of the altar, there's a small room, usually locked. This is the sacristy, where the Altar Guild does its work of preparing the altar for services and taking down after services. The sacristy is locked when no one is working in it, not so much to keep anyone out as to protect the valuable objects—silver, brass, linens, and altar hangings, some very old and given by generous donors many years ago. They would be very expensive to replace if stolen or lost besides their sentimental value. (A list of things stolen from the church would make a subject for a column by itself.)

The new St. Raphael's, like any Episcopal Church, needed an Altar Guild. Olive Finney with her husband Humphrey arrived at St. Raphael's just in time to fill this need. The way she organized the guild was so successful that we still use the system today, doing what she said to do then.

Humphrey Finney was president of Fasig-Tipton horse auction sales. As he traveled to auctions, Olive went along and passed the time doing needlepoint. When you kneel at the altar to receive the Eucharist, you are kneeling on cushions that were needlepointed by Olive and other early members of the guild: Pat Dinsmore, E.A. Cones, and the rector's wife, Alicia Page. The cushions are among the oldest things we still use. Olive also made the white wedding kneeler that so many couples have knelt on.



*Olive Finney*

She divided the guild into four teams, each taking one Sunday of the month and rotating duty for the occasional fifth Sunday. The Altar Guild exists to serve the priest and is under direct supervision of the priest. When she comes to the altar, everything needed is to be there and ready. Several members of the Altar Guild are also in the Flower Guild which arranges flowers for services.

Olive and Humphrey are buried in the columbarium which was one of their gifts to the church.

Peggy Taylor succeeded Olive as Guild Director. One Sunday morning, she tapped me on the shoulder and asked if I would like to be on it. I really didn't think I would but I said yes, hoping that would mean I'd never be asked to teach Sunday School. It worked, and I grew to love the service. Other directors have been Pat Dinsmore, Rose Canon, and currently Diane Whorley. There is a need for more volunteers. No experience is required, only dedication and dependability. If interested in this very rewarding service, speak to Diane when you see her at church (she's there a lot) or call her, 859-224-4762.

—Rose Canon

## Ministry

### **A Thin Place may be closer than you think**

Have you ever gone to a "Thin Place?" The pastor and author Mark D. Roberts describes a thin place as "a place where the boundary between heaven and earth is especially thin. It's a place where we can sense the divine more readily." *In Thin Places: A Biblical Investigation*.

The phrase 'Thin places' (caol áit) comes from the Celtic tradition. According to the blogger Lydia K.M. Keller, "this idea can simply be looked at as mountain tops or other physical places that the air is thin or hard to come by. Thin places really reflect a spiritual thinness as well. When we face trials, eternity becomes closer. The kingdom is more visible. But this is all about the perspective we choose to have."

Does one have to climb a mountain to get close to God? Some people say they attend Nature's church when they hike at Raven's Run or go rock climbing at the Domain. Some people have felt God's presence visiting an old cathedral, Canterbury, or Bath Abbey when a choral evensong is being sung. But finding a thin place doesn't necessarily take a ticket and a tour bus to happen. A thin place can happen right here, in church, with a sermon that strikes a chord within you, or an anthem that you know and love, or a candle-light service that reminds you of being with a beloved person who is no longer with us. A thin place can happen before a service, when the lightning, thunder and winds are blowing and the lights flicker off and on, briefly, but then stay on for the beginning and duration of the service while the houses across the street were dark, having lost their electric power. It is



the kind of happening that makes one wonder, how is it our power stayed on the way it did? Did God really want the service to go on as scheduled?

Taizé music also has a way of relaxing one's mind. The chants' verses are repeated over and over, the eyes cease having to "read" the words, as the mind carries the song itself and the space between earth and heaven becomes thin.

Another place to find a thin place is serving at the altar as a Lay Eucharist Minister (LEM). I often begin to feel it happening with the Great Thanksgiving, the Prayer of Consecration, and the Lord's Prayer, and my own communion with Rev. Helen. The thin place becomes thinnest, though, when I, or rather my soul, is offering the Cup of Salvation to each and every one of you, your souls, face to face, at the communion rail. It is a time when there is nothing standing between us, except Heaven, which is not between us, but surrounding us. And then, after the work of communion meal is done, and the prayer of thanksgiving is being prayed, I feel like I, or maybe my soul, is floating on air, energized totally and, yes, truly thankful for having been given the opportunity to serve this day as a LEM. If serving at the altar is something that you have thought about, the next step, after praying about it, would be to talk with Rev. Helen about making such a commitment to service. We would love to help you in this next opportunity to serve.

Faithfully,

*Ben Harper*

\* \* \*



St. Raphael's donations to the Greater Gardenside Back to School Program which supports James Lane Allen Elementary. Monetary donations are always welcome. See Rev. Helen for details.

## *Worship*

### **Sundays**

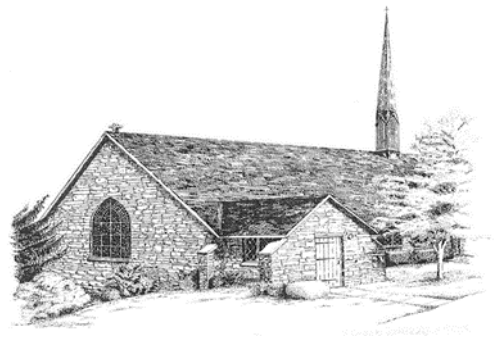
Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8:30 a.m.  
Holy Eucharist Rite II with music, 11:00 a.m.

### **Wednesdays**

Eucharist with Healing,  
Noon

### **Compline**

Sundays, Tuesdays, and Fridays, 7:00 p.m.  
on Facebook



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