



The Anchor

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Contents

- 1 Letter from the Priest Locum Tenens
- 2 May the Lord Make Us Truly Thankful
- 3-4 Worship
- 4-5 Education
- 5 Outreach
- 6 Parish Life

A Prayer for the Parish

Let us, therefore, proclaim our gratitude to Providence for manifold blessings — let us be humbly thankful for inherited ideals — and let us resolve to share those blessings and those ideals with our fellow human beings throughout the world.

On that day let us gather in sanctuaries dedicated to worship and in homes blessed by family affection to express our gratitude for the glorious gifts of God, and let us earnestly and humbly pray that He will continue to guide and sustain us in the great unfinished tasks of achieving peace, justice, and understanding among all men and nations and of ending misery and suffering wherever they exist.

- John F. Kennedy, *Thanksgiving Day*, 1963

Grace & Holy Trinity Church

an Episcopal parish on Monroe Park



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Letter from the Priest Locum Tenens

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

When I first entered into the fellowship of the Episcopal Church, I found myself “surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1). Through the daily commemoration of the saints, I met Stephen, the first martyr; Francis of Assisi, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Dorothy Day. They were “the lights of the world in their generations” (*The Book of Common Prayer*), for they reflected the light of Christ. By their lights I was able to see more clearly what it might look like for me to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ. I thank God that we now offer an 8:00 a.m. celebration of the Holy Eucharist on Wednesdays, at which we commemorate a different saint each week.



The saints still inspire me, and I discover new ones all the time. Not long ago I learned about The Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray (1910-1985), commemorated on July 1st in the Episcopal church calendar. She was a pioneering civil rights advocate, attorney, and professor, and became an Episcopal priest later in life. She was gender non-conforming before we had a vocabulary to describe our Christian siblings who identify as LGBTQIA+. Today, a college at Yale University is named for her. Next year, a U.S. quarter will be minted with her likeness in her clerical collar. She was also a poet, who drew from her African-American heritage when she wrote in her 1970 poem *Dark Testament* that “Hope is a song in a weary throat.”

Every day at this parish I meet saints — disciples who love their Lord, and who are committed to the life and ministry of this parish. They serve and sacrifice. They are steadfast and hopeful. They smile and they sing with joy. Getting to know them — getting to know you — is a joy and a delight for me.

You inspire me, and I am so blessed to minister with you.

Faithfully in Christ,

The Reverend Gregory Bezilla,
Priest Locum Tenens (Interim)

May the Lord Make Us Truly Thankful

Twenty years ago this month, Isabel the ex-hurricane, furious at having been downgraded to a tropical storm, threw a temper tantrum across Virginia. All night long, she tossed off savage squalls, turned hundred-year-old trees into cudgels, tore up neighborhoods at random, sent storm surges up rivers with the high tides, and plunged us into the eighteenth century for the better part of a week. Property was damaged, people were hurt, businesses lost revenue. And yet, in the aftermath, standing in the streets or the stores, people were thankful.

A man who lost his car and half his house found his dogs after two days. An elderly woman escaped being crushed when the tree that collapsed her bedroom ceiling fell at a lucky angle. Neighbors pulled out their grills and cooked whatever was thawing in their freezers to share with each other. Families rediscovered the pleasure of playing games by candlelight, and the forcibly disconnected caught up on their sleep in the deep dark and quiet of the natural nights. The restaurants in downtown Richmond had power, and every night they bustled with people sharing storm stories over a glass of wine or bottled water.

For most of us, the worst effect was inconvenience and a little too much time between showers. But what if we had to fix Thanksgiving dinner without all these conveniences that have become our necessities? There's something to start your gratitude program running. You couldn't cook anything in advance and freeze it. You wouldn't be able to rinse the turkey and the vegetables or boil the potatoes in clean water from the tap.

You couldn't mix the dough for rolls or the batter for cornbread in a stand mixer, or chop onions and celery for stuffing in the food processor, or scald milk for puddings in the microwave. You couldn't vacuum the dining room, or steam iron the tablecloth, and worst of all, you'd have to do all the washing up by hand. Suddenly, our great-grandmothers seem like miracle workers.

The best holiday stories do seem to come from near disasters. One year, my cousin got up at five-thirty in the morning to put the enormous turkey in the oven and forgot to turn the oven on. Another year, a friend tripped over the dog and

launched three pounds of soufflé sweet potatoes into the centerpiece. A year or so after that, somebody's father blew a champagne cork into the chandelier and rained broken crystal into the perfectly composed salad bowl. And yet, despite those near-catastrophes, laughter saved the day, hearts filled with gratitude, and sincere thanks were given.

In our diligent attempts to honor our traditions, we express what it is to be human, with all its triumphs and its failures.

Those efforts, however disastrous their outcomes, become part of our shared history as families, as communities, and as a nation. And during this one authentically American festival, people of all races and religions and national origins clasp hands around a common table, with friends and strangers alike, in gratitude to God for the shared blessings of being alive, of being together, and of being loved, however imperfectly, above all else.

— Ann Norvell Gray



Worship

Dinner Church

In the middle of October, the Campus Ministry crew rolled out the newest of the service offerings, this one based on the habit of the earliest church to gather and worship by breaking bread together. On the afternoon of Sunday the 15th of October, Kate Given, her husband Theo, and Kyle Reed teamed up and made vegetarian chili for the inaugural 5:30 p.m. gathering. The following Sunday, the three of them fixed a classic spaghetti dinner. They served a salad and dessert, which they plan to include with every main dish they choose. They had 12 guests the first evening, and 13 on the second. “We also had the good fortune to have the compline choir with us on those two evenings,” says Kate.

The overall design plan, she explains, is to spend the afternoon cooking, after which the arriving folks help us set the tables. “Then,” she says, “we sing, pray, and share a meal and conversation. Afterwards, we all clean up together, and those that wish to stick around do some crafty thing. Last time we made spooky gingerbread houses for Halloween.” The hope is that these evenings will generate meaningful connections with the university community that surrounds us, creating a bright and homey spot in the busy weeks. In these warm and capable hands, it seems destined to succeed.

The Sounds of the Pipe Organ



On Sunday morning, October 15th, as part of the Adult Formation Sunday Series, Dr. Elizabeth Melcher Davis and Stanley M. Baker gave a fine presentation on the history, structure, and capabilities of the marvelous instrument in the GHTC chancel. The modern organ traces its

origins to Greece in the third century B.C. Wind pressure in the earliest pipes was controlled by water pressure, and later by inflated leather bags. Stops that allowed the variation in tones appeared during the Renaissance. The Baroque period was the golden age of organ building. Then in the Romantic period, the organ began to resemble the depth and richness of the orchestra. As technology developed in and through the modern era, more and more systems were applied to the flexibility and variety of these glorious instruments.

Now, the well-trained organist learns to understand and operate a complex machine full of mechanical and electronic equipment, and can do it while interpreting equally complicated music in support of our worship. The two exceptionally able musicians we are fortunate to have on the GHTC staff give us the fruits of their years of hard work, and the generosity within their own hearts, as their gifts to us fortunate souls in the pews.

Contact Beth, Stan, or the Communications Team for a copy of their presentation's outline, with more history and the technical information about what the parts of organs can do, and what is specific to this one. Listen to the full forum on YouTube to hear the four works they chose to demonstrate what our organ can do, and you cannot help but be both proud and humbled as this music transports you like a mantra to the soul's core connection to God.

2024 Pledge Drive Presentations

October is Pledge Drive Month, when we ask everyone who has a sense of gratitude for what is accomplished in this warm, supportive parish by the gifts of time, talent, and treasure, which are so freely given, to focus on the treasure part of the equation. As part of the effort to raise what is needed to keep the engine running, two members of the Vestry and three intrepid young people stood up in front of us and told us why they give.

Senior Warden David Lewis was first out of the gate, telling us about how he was thinking about the connection between the material needs of the church and the spiritual aspect of church life,

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Worship *(continued)*



William giving his Pledge Drive Speech at Children & Youth Sunday

and landed on something he had heard here from a theologian, who “once asked us to give, not until it hurts, but until it feels good.” David went on to say that when he has followed the promptings of the Holy Spirit with kindness or with cash, it felt good all over.

The next week, Kathy Wommack talked to us about her meandering path through denominations and levels of attendance until she came to GHTC in the 1990s, “and voilà! I became an Episcopalian!” Early in the next decade, changes here troubled her, and she drifted off again. Then in 2021, new life once again entered this church, and she saw the power of love and community grow here. Kathy was back in with her whole heart. Despite the grief she has felt in the last months, she quotes from a popular television show about developing community in a wildly different place facing a loss. “I think,” says the central character, “things come into our lives to help us get from one place to a better one.” She reminds us of David’s inspiration, and invited us to give until it feels good.

At the 8:00 a.m. service one day, young Hank Dykshorn told us that, in spite of having to drag himself out of bed on a Sunday morning, the time with his family, the kindness of the parishioners, and the gift of a fresh start after a quiet break in his busy life are what makes coming to church valuable to him. At the picnic at Roslyn,

young William Lee gave a charming speech about generosity, declaring from the jump that an 11-year old is in no position to give anything meaningful. Still, he likened the measure of generosity to being thirsty and stopping at a 7-11 with his dad for a cold drink. “You can give,” he said, “a small, a medium, or a Big Gulp!” He cracked the place up, and made his point.

Then Maurice Cole told us a great story, illustrating a point worth making. A guy is walking by a cliff, slips, and falls over, breaking his fall by grabbing a lone branch sticking out of the very deep and utterly sheer cliff wall. He yells and yells, “Help! Help! Is anybody up there?” Nothing. Nobody. Then a disembodied voice is heard, calling his name. “Who are you?” he shouts. “Where are you?” “I am the Lord, and I am everywhere.” The guy immediately begins to swear to transform his imperfect behavior, at which the voice says, “Easy on the promises. Let’s get you down. Let go of the branch.” “What?” says the desperate fellow. He waits. Nothing. Silence. Then the guy yells, “Is anybody else up there?” The message is clear in this context. Doesn’t matter what you can’t see. Think on what you know surrounds you, lifts you up, and then give until it feels good.

Education

Confirmation Retreats

The first and second Confirmation retreats of the 2023-2024 program year were held on Sunday, September 10th, 2023, and November 12th, 2023. The retreats focused on the questions “What is Confirmation?” and “What does it mean to be Christian?,” respectively. Facilitated by Associate Rector Paul Evans and parishioner Catherine Perrin, the retreats also included team-building activities designed to help our candidates to better know one another.

Remaining Retreats during the Program Year

- **Retreat #3** | Sunday, February 4, 2024
- **Retreat #4** | Sunday, April 14, 2024
- **Make-up Session** | TBD
- **Bishop’s Visit** | April 28, 2024

Sunday School

As we continue to develop and refine our approach to Christian formation for all ages, the Vestry has voted to authorize a committee, made up of parishioners who are deeply interested in this important part of our ministry together. Together with the clergy, this committee will steer the decisions made by our leadership so that every member of this diverse community stands to grow in the love modeled for us by Jesus for the whole world.

The schedule has now been adjusted to offer Sunday School for our children and youth at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday morning, followed by their return to the service to celebrate Eucharist with their families. Please refer to the eNews, the weekly bulletins, and the GHTC website for the specifics of this new schedule.



Children's Sunday School on All Saints' Sunday

Parish Life

Children & Youth Sunday, Grace & Holy-ween, and the Parish Picnic

On Sunday, October 29th, at Roslyn, the parish celebrated with the fall Parish Picnic, Grace & Holy-ween activities, and worship led by the children and youth, with the able planning of many, Faces and stones were painted and pumpkins carved. Chairs, many of which were brought by the parishioners for the occasion, were arranged in wide rows on the lawn, facing the terrace, which was set up for the celebration of Evening Prayer. Stan Baker was joined at the keyboard by David and Ratna Lewis's daughter Sita Clare on the flute and Mason and Megan Lecky's daughter Mary on the violin. The children's choir was positively heavenly. The young lectors wrestled valiantly with complicated scriptural passages. Children & Young Families Minister Kate Given delivered the homily, in which she made clear what love is, and what it might look like.

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Pumpkin Carving at Grace & Holy-ween



books and the causes of homelessness. The topics vary from month to month, and are prompted by what's being covered in the news media and other sources. Participants have the chance to rotate the responsibility for initiating each month's discussion topic. The group is open to all male members of the congregation, and newcomers are always welcome.

Happy Hour at Westminster Canterbury

On October 16th, a jolly group of people of a certain age convened for drinks in the Courtyard lounge at Westminster Canterbury. There were more than 25 people in attendance, most of whom live there, plus about a half dozen parishioners who live elsewhere, but who are believed to be in the proper age group (but who's counting?). By all reports, it was a warm, festive time, making the most of the welcoming residence, and giving true meaning to "happy hour." Thank you to all who contributed time and treasure. Let's do this again regularly, shall we?

Outreach

Red Door Ministry Winter Gear Drive

Contact: Porsche Pierson

Phone: (904) 730-9302

Thank you for your excellent response to our current winter gear drive. Coats will be distributed on Friday, December 1st, at our weekly Red Door luncheon. We will still be needing warm clothing during the winter months, so please keep those coats coming! Warm winter socks are also appreciated. Your donations may be left in the wooden box right between the elevator and the back door to the kitchen, and receipts are available there, too.

We always need sweatshirts and pants, travel size toiletries, individually wrapped toothbrushes, men's and women's underwear (new in package, please), and belts. If any of you have large donations and would like them to be picked up, please call Porsche Pierson to arrange it.

It was a beautiful sunny day, without a trace of the accustomed autumnal briskness, and we could easily have eaten dinner outside. The hospitality committee's usual excellent planning gave us a heaping pile of fried chicken and plenty of beverages. The parishioners filled in with delicious sides and desserts of all sorts. Everyone was grateful to the youngsters who were so ably prepared, to the staff and volunteers that put all these events together, and to everyone else for coming to celebrate all that we give to and gain from each other throughout the year.

Men's Group

The GHTC Men's Group began in 2022 to offer male members of the congregation the opportunity to get together in an informal setting over coffee, and to talk about about current issues. We meet on the fourth Saturday of every month at Ellwood Thompson's, the local grocery and café at the top of Carytown. The participation varies from month to month, but recently we've been eight or ten. It has proved to be a great opportunity for fellowship, and a way to learn more about other men of the congregation. Recently, we have talked about the controversy surrounding the banning of



Sunday Worship

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Spoken | Chapel)

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist* (Choral | Church)

**Livestream Available*

5:30 PM Dinner Church*

**Please use the N. Laurel Street entrances.*

Other Services

Wednesday Morning Eucharist

Wednesdays at 8:00 AM (Chapel)

Red Door Ministry Lunch

Fridays at 12:00 PM

Save the Dates

Thanksgiving Day Worship

Thursday, November 23 | 9:00 AM (Church)

Advent Wreath Making

Sunday, November 26 | 9:00 AM (Parish Hall)

Holy Strollers Holiday Lights Walk

Tuesday, December 19 | 4:30 PM (Begins at One Monument Avenue)

Caroling in Monroe Park & Holiday Market

Sunday, December 3 | 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (Monroe Park)

GHTC's Centennial Celebration

Sunday, June 2, 2024

Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24

3:00 PM Christmas Pageant (Choral | Church)

5:00 PM Festival of Christmas Lessons & Carols (Choral | Church)

11:00 PM Holy Eucharist (Choral | Church)

Christmas Day, Monday, December 25

10:00 AM Holy Eucharist* (Choral | Church)

**One service only.*

For more information on upcoming events and to view GHTC's full calendar visit ghtc.org/calendar.

Youth Orchestra Flutist Sita



Grace & Holy Trinity Church



Church Staff

The Rev. Gregory Bezilla
Priest Locum Tenens (Interim)

The Rev. Paul Evans
Associate Rector for Formation & Communications

Stanley M. Baker
Assistant Choirmaster & Organist

Roland Boone
Sexton

Judy F. Bowman
Financial Secretary & Administrative Assistant

Tyler Brady
Communications Associate

Dr. Elizabeth Melcher Davis
Choirmaster & Organist

Lauren Frazier
Executive Assistant to the Clergy

Kate Given
Children & Young Families Minister

Barbara Hobson-Simpson
Receptionist

Kyle Reed
*Assoc. for Communications,
Administration, & Campus Ministry*

Abigail Stinnett
Children's Choir Director

Vestry

David Lewis, *Senior Warden*

Meredith McGuire, *Junior Warden*

Mary Ann Blankenship, Chuck Bleick,
Jane Carlson, Judy Carlson, Maurice Cole,
Brad Davenport, Mike Hale, Terry Hathaway,
Clay Hilbert, Dan McNamara, Mason New, &
Fielding Williams

Lay Ministry Leaders

Jean Jumet, *Altar Guild*

Kate Given, *Christian Education*

Glenn Moore, *Circles RVA*

Lu Treadwell, *Foyer Groups*

Lisa Dawson, *Greeters*

Susan Hankins, *Holy Strollers*

Sandie Hale &
Karin Walker, *Hospitality Group*

The Rev. Jack Sutor, *Lectionary Group*

Beth McClelland, *Lectio Divina*

Ann Norvell Gray, *Lectors*

Chuck Bleick, *Men's Group*

Mary Cay Kollmansperger, *Missionary Society*

Dr. Elizabeth Melcher Davis &
Stanley M. Baker, *Music*

Betsy Featherstone, *Needlers*

Andrew Peacock, *Property Committee*

Douglas Erikson, *Shining Examples*

Molly Howle & Porsche Pierson, *Red Door Ministry*

Mary Ann Blankenship, *Spirited Sisters*

Judy Carlson, *Spirited Readers Book Club*

Clay Hilbert, *Ushers*

Contact

To reach a member of staff or clergy, please call the Parish Office. To reach a Vestry member or Lay Ministry leaders, please visit ghtc.org/contact. There, you may fill in the name of the person you want to contact, and the message will be delivered.

Office Hours

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM Monday - Friday