
THE VOICE



Bethesda Episcopal Church: Volume 1, Issue 3

December 2015

FROM THE INTERIM RECTOR'S STUDY

My Dear People and Friends of the Bethesda Family:

By the time you receive this issue of THE VOICE, the Season of Advent will have begun. It is a New Church Year, and, during the majority of our liturgical celebrations, Saint Luke the Evangelist will be our guide. Christians have been observing Advent for over sixteen hundred years. The Sunday nearest November thirtieth, the Feast of Saint Andrew, serves as our departure point. There are stops en route, some routinely familiar and others that seem less memorable. Confidently and in faith, the glorification of Christ our King awaits us. He who is Alpha and Omega claims, as always, to be our Ruler, our Companion, and our Lover.

The word *advent* means *coming*, or *arrival*. Reviewing the Latin origin of the word, *adventus*, is most helpful. It means a coming to or coming towards. The One which the Church awaits is of divine origin, but One, which Holy Scripture attests, assumes our human nature. When we mention or refer to the Advent of Jesus Christ, you gain the sense of a powerful, life-changing *encounter*.

Our world, its culture, the Church, Bethesda, you and I need

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Feasible Capital Campaign Outlined for Parish

*Gordon Boyd, Chair
Building Committee/Capital Campaign*

Bethesda reached two major milestones the week of November 18-19 in our progress toward developing the New Parish House and church restoration projects.

On Wednesday November 18, the city's Design Review Commission unanimously and enthusiastically approved the NPH design, applauding the work of John G. Waite Associates as "stunning" and praising the community-oriented focus as well. DRC's approval is our last stop on the land use regulatory pathway; we only must return to DRC to show final selection of exterior materials, brick, trim limestone, roofing, etc. when appropriate.

Less than 24 hours later, the feasibility report on our impending Capital Campaign was presented by Leslie Pendleton, consultant for the Episcopal Church Foundation, which conducted the recent parish survey. Meeting in the Parish Hall, about three dozen parishioners heard the principal findings:

- 70 units of the parish responded to the survey, about 22%.
- 96% are in favor of conducting a Capital Campaign, but with some reservations
- High priority projects begin with the church roof, NPH and facilities, accessibility in both buildings, conservation plumbing and electrical measures, heating and ventilation system upgrades and the pipe organ.
- Positive factors include community longevity and support, ability to attract more worshippers to a renewed facility, and "we need a parish house."
- Possible problems include raising the money, declining church attendance, and lack of understanding of fundraising and stewardship—no track record.

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The Great(?) Bethesda Safe Caper

Vexilla Regis

In a tiny, dusty closet on the second floor of the Parish House, there reposes a handsome, yet formidable looking Victorian iron safe. How long it has been there, no one knows, but it is safe to say (no pun intended. Really!) that the building was not built around it. It has aroused the interest of the parish staff for many years, and more recently has fired the fantasies of the parish archivists. No one could open it, and the key was lost long ago.

Quite recently, I received a message from Our Beloved Newsletter Editor, stating "Come by the Parish House. The safe has been opened!" "I'll be right there!" I hastily typed, and flew out the door, my feverish mind whirling. What did they find? A pile of gold coins, sufficient to pay for the new Parish House? Long-lost trust documents that have been the subject of an exhaustive search by archivists? A cache of tiaras, bracelets, rings, and other fine gems and jewelry that the parish staff would be sporting upon my arrival?

Upon arrival, I found OBNE bringing items out of the safe. My first query: just who in the parish turned out to be an expert safe cracker? "Farrell [Goehring, our organist and music director]," OBNE replied. "It wasn't locked, just stuck. He just jiggled the handle a couple of times, and it opened right up." She brought items out a few at a time: a silver plate (and, relatively worthless) tea set, circa 1880; bank books and ledgers from long-closed accounts; silver plate flatware (antique, but still relatively worthless). And, curiously enough, a pair of turquoise plastic cocktail picks (1950s) with the Howard Johnson's logo on them, and a modern stainless steel kitchen spoon. The only items of interest were a set of sterling handled knives and a coin silver tea spoon from about 1840.

So, sadly, there were no Bethesda Crown Jewels, no hidden documents, and no gold doubloons to pay for the new Parish House. But, instead of feeling like Geraldo Rivera standing around Al Capone's empty vault, I think we all enjoyed a great adventure.

And we will always remember the day that Farrell became a safe cracker.

Are you on our mailing list? Please call the church office at (518) 584-5980 or email Barbara@bethesdachurch.org to make sure we have your email, address and phone number.

Using data gathered from the survey, and ECF's methodology for projecting potential campaign goals from survey information, **the Recommended Primary Goal for the campaign is \$331,000.** Although this goal is lower than some had hoped, ECF projects with 92% confidence that we can attain it. During discussion, Ms. Pendleton suggested that after a successful three year campaign and a couple of years' hiatus, a second campaign could be initiated to complete certain unfinished measures, and/or pay down debt. This approach has been successful in other Episcopal institutions ECF has assisted. The Vestry was expected to act on this recommendation at its November 22 meeting.

Among other results of the survey is a cohort of volunteers eager to canvass and solicit gifts and pledges, the desirability of greater structure to a "planned giving" effort (9 parishioners have named Bethesda in their wills), and the need to increase communication about the entire project through regular announcements, flyers and newsletters and the parish web site.

Timing of the Campaign was discussed for First Quarter 2016, subject to Vestry approval, to dovetail with other financial and construction schedules.

Ms. Pendleton concluded her presentation with a quotation from Henri Nouwen from the *Spirituality of Fund-Raising*: "Fund-raising is proclaiming what we believe in such a way that we offer other people an opportunity to participate with us in our vision and mission. Fundraising is precisely the opposite of begging. When we seek to raise funds we are not saying, 'please could you help us out because it's been hard.' Rather, we are declaring, 'We have a vision that is amazing and exciting. We are inviting you to invest yourself through the resources that God has given you—your energy, your prayers and your money—in this work to which God has called us.'"

Following Ms. Pendleton's presentation, Geoff Delbridge presented slides showing the financial model that guides the Building Committee and Vestry in its decision making. Based on current plans and peer-reviewed projections of costs and revenues, the NPH is forecasted to generate positive net income to the parish after expenses, debt service and other costs.

Ms. Pendleton's presentation will be mounted soon on the parish web site, www.bethesdachurch.org, and printed copies of her 30-page report will be available as well. The financial model will also be accessible to parishioners, both on the web site and by appointment with Mr. Delbridge or Mr. Boyd. ❖

John Arango

Dean Vang

On Wednesday, November 18, one of Bethesda's stalwarts entered into eternal rest with Our Lord: John Arango. John's constancy in worshipping at the ten o'clock Sung Eucharist will be remembered by all. It was only minor illness or intolerable winter weather that prevented him from being present. His weekly priority was being with his Bethesda family. When suppers or special events were scheduled, John was very much in evidence. His disability did not deter him.

In fact, when the Building Committee approached him regarding accessibility issues for the New Parish House, John responded with clarity and compassion. Let us continue to cherish both John's infectious smile as well as his fervent devotion to the Good Shepherd, Christ Jesus. The Communion of Saints has welcomed him. For this we give thanks. May John rest in peace and his soul rise in glory.



Bethesda Prayer Shawl Ministry

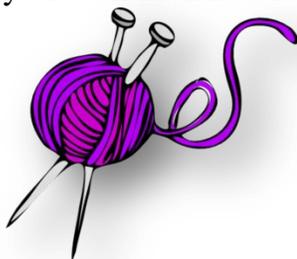
Millie Meeker

On the second Thursday of each month a group meets at the Parish House. Each person knits or crochets a project for the ministry.

They make white blankets to be given to babies that are baptized in our church and lap robes and throws for those in nursing homes.

These also are given to those in need, veterans, the sick, elderly and friends. Their goal is to bring some joy into the lives of others.

Everyone is welcome to join this dedicated group for a couple of hours on the second Thursday of each month at 1:00 PM



Bethesda's Treasures Errata

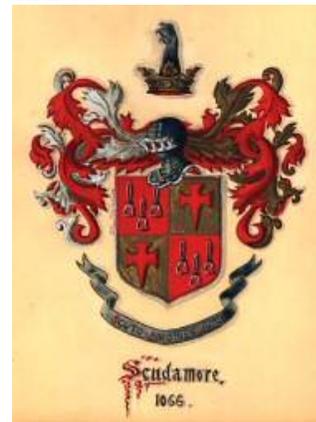
Mary Sanders Shartle

Since the last issue of "Bethesda's Treasures" the church archivists have discovered new material in the Parish House files regarding the High Altar cross. Such detective work has proved to be invaluable in providing documentation of the valuable historical objects in Bethesda Episcopal Church, also providing even greater mysteries.

The cross on the High Altar was mentioned in the Parish Record (1925-26) and in the Centennial booklet (1930-31). A new document was recently found that shows the High Altar cross is much newer than previously reported, and was donated not by the Putnam sisters in 1880s but by Mrs. Lillian Ford Andrews in October, 1946. The description of the elegant cross is unmistakable in this record of memorials from 1947. The Parish Record and Centennial booklets, alas, do not provide much in the way of descriptions. What happened to, or where, the Putnam sisters' cross is, is another Bethesda Treasures Mystery.

The cross's donor, Mrs. Andrews was married at Bethesda in 1891, and the jeweled cross was presented to the church in tribute to the Reverend Rouillard in 1946. She died shortly after making the gift, presented by her niece, Miss Dorothy Ford Mayhew, a librarian at Harvard's Institute of Geographical Exploration. Mrs. Andrews grew up at 126 Lake Avenue, the daughter of M/M Stephen Van Rensselaer Ford.

Thanks to Farrell Goehring, Diane Robinson and Stuart Armstrong for their diligence in uncovering this document for the archives. As always, anyone with knowledge of the vast array of Bethesda's Treasures is urged to contact Mary Sanders Shartle, cree8mss@gmail.com More information, we hope, will be forthcoming about Mrs. Lillian Ford Andrews. She is noted on the internet as having drawn a coat of arms for Skidmore College based on the Welsh coat of arms for the Scudamores, progenitors, presumably, of the Lucy Scribner Skidmore family. Note the saddle stirrups, motto and unicorn head



An undated original artwork by Lillian Ford Andrews (Skidmore College Archives) Wiki ❖

PARISHIONER SPOTLIGHT



CATHERINE (KATE) BERHEIDE first came to Bethesda in 1979 with her late husband, Bruce, and infant son, Daniel. Over the years, she has continued to be involved in the life of the church. She served on the vestry in 1990s, and is currently serving another term. She served on the Board of Trustees and the Board of Lady Managers of the Home of the Good Shepherd until 2001. She is now serving as a Eucharistic minister (the first woman to hold this position in the history of Bethesda).

Her service at Bethesda comes naturally as she grew up in Chicago where her father, the Reverend Warner White, was the rector at St. Paul and the Redeemer, and her mother, Phyllis, was the executive secretary to the President of the Chicago Theological Seminary (United Church of Christ). After moving to Vermont and until her death, her mother was the organist at Trinity Church in Shelburne. Her father still preaches there regularly and posts his sermons online (<http://www.warnercwhite.org/>) so his former parishioners, among others, can read them. Kate is carrying on the strong tradition of service to the church embraced by her parents.

Kate is a Professor of Sociology at Skidmore College where she has taught for 37 years. She is currently serving as president of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, the oldest national honor society, and vice chair of the Phi Beta Kappa Foundation.

Kate's two children grew up in Bethesda. Kate's son, Daniel Berheide, graduated from Beloit College and has a master's degree in forestry from the University of British Columbia. He is now living in Greenwich, CT, where he is employed by the City of Greenwich as the assistant wetlands compliance officer. He still enjoys playing ice hockey, a sport he loved while growing up in Saratoga Springs. While attending Bethesda, both he and his sister, Sarah, sang in the Treble Choir and served as acolytes during the summer months.

Sarah Berheide Lamphier now lives in Greensboro, NC, with her husband Jon and their son Jonas. She and her family attend Holy Trinity Episcopal Church there. Sarah is the lacrosse coach at Guilford College, a fitting path after her successes as a player at Skidmore College and then as a coach at Bard College. Sarah was inducted in September of 2015 into the Skidmore Athletics Hall of Fame, a celebratory occasion for the entire family. Kate enjoys her time visiting with grandson Jonas who celebrated his first birthday in June. ❖

Choir Baby Arrives Early!

Genna Henderson

10:00 Parishioners Emily Hoops-Darling and Wes Darling greeted the arrival of their son, Nolan Jamieson Darling on November 5th this year. Nolan was not expected until the end of December (in fact, the choir had been placing bets on whether or not Emily would be able to take her customary place singing soprano for Midnight Mass), but the most recent addition to our congregation was raring to go and, I am told, came out screaming lustily. The choir hopes he'll grow up to be a tenor. Nolan is the first choir baby since Emma Bullock, who is now in her second year of college at FIT in New York City, so we'll have to make sure the treble choir is ready for him when he comes of age. Because of his early arrival, Nolan's still going to have to hang out in the NICU for a while longer, but he's growing bigger and stronger every day and he and his mother are doing well. ❖

MORNING GREETING TO OUR BABIES

Good morning little sunshine!
How did you wake so soon?
You scared away the little stars
And shined away the moon!

-Guess Who?

October's Guess Who author was...

Carolyn Hatch!

*Can you guess who it is this time?
(If you'd like to submit a Guess Who poem, talk
to Carolyn Hatch.)*

Join the Bethesda Youth Group on Thursday, December 3 from 5pm to 7pm for their annual Spaghetti Dinner. Proceeds from the dinner are used to purchase Christmas gifts for underprivileged teenagers in our community. This is a great way to kick off your visit downtown for the Victorian Streetwalk and Christmas Tree Lighting. Friends are always welcome.



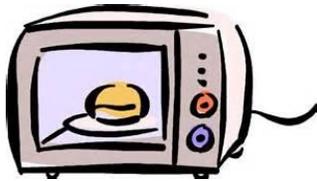
such an encounter. Current events reveal that malevolence is succeeding, that hate seems stronger than love, that conflict is more prevalent than peace, that lies win out over truth, that pain overshadows happiness. Advent is a time for us to renew our capacity to receive the grace of Emmanuel into our lives. Let us align ourselves with John the Baptist, the personification of all the Prophets, whose urgency to speak begs us to turn away from dead works towards the living God. Encouraged by the Blessed Virgin Mary, who personifies the Church as the Bride of Christ and Mother of the faithful, let us manifest in our words and in our deeds that the more completely we yield ourselves to God's grace, the more blessed and stronger we will be.

Advent is the briefest of all Church Season. There is no time to waste. Welcome these words from the Revelation to Saint John the Divine. Make them happen.

Every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him...So it is to be. Amen.

Devotedly yours,

The Very Reverend Marshall J. Vang
Interim Rector ❖



Do you have an extra microwave hanging around? Would you like to be storing one less item? Maybe we can help. The Parish House is in need of a microwave. If you have one in good, clean, working condition, and would like to donate it to us, we would be ever so grateful. Please call Barbara in the church office at 584-5980.

Advent Lessons and Carols
Sunday December 6th at 3:00 PM
Beautiful music followed by a
reception. What better way to start
the season?



(We've got a new King Uzziah. It's actually really pretty.)

Vestry Minutes (abridged)

"The Vestry of an Episcopal Church has three primary responsibilities... to take care of the parish finances and parish buildings [and] to choose individuals to fill various positions of parish leadership"

-Christopher L. Webber

The Vestry Handbook: Revised Edition

OCTOBER

Dean Vang called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM on October 28. Sarah Manny began the meeting with devotions. Denise Limoli was nominated to fill the vacancy on the vestry and was unanimously approved.

Expenses are lower than they were at this time last year, but donations are down by 8%, which is problematic in funding the basic needs of the church. Work on next year's budget has begun. Our diocesan assessment has come in at \$51,308. The vestry voted in favor of paying the assessment in full.

The Deacon reported that confirmation classes are proceeding well and that he continues to visit Wesley. He will hand deliver birthday cards to Mary Eddy.

There was unanimous approval to change our insurance carrier to the National Church.

The building committee is investigating grants to help fund the new parish hall.

It was noted that Dean Vang is celebrating the 41st year of his priesthood.

The meeting was closed with a prayer.

NOVEMBER

Dean Vang called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM on Sunday, November 22nd and kindly supplied soup, which was greatly appreciated, especially by those who had been in choir practice all day. The Vestry welcomed Denise Limoli, who is filling the vacancy.

Anne Van Acker reported that pledge and plate is behind budget by about \$5,500, which is less than we worried it might be but still significant enough to cause concern, especially in light of the reduced income from the Building Fund Party this year. Our diocesan assessment for next year is \$20,000 over what it was for this year, which is considerable. We will appeal for a reduction, but we would still be looking at a significant deficit for 2016.

Dean Vang encouraged everybody to make an effort to attend the Eucharist on December 20th to show support for the young people being confirmed.

Dean Vang's office computer has kicked the proverbial bucket, so a new one must be obtained.

Mr. Boyd moved to establish a goal of \$330,000 for the Capital Campaign, to hire ECF to help us with the campaign and to begin recruiting a task force from the parish. All three motions passed unanimously.

The personnel committee is very close to completing the employee handbook.

Mr. Delbridge reported on behalf of the stewardship committee that the pledge cards are still coming in and, at the moment, we're about \$7,500 behind last year.

Ms. Agee reported that the parish history book will be sent to a professional editor soon.

The meeting was adjourned, with a prayer, at 2:40.

From the Editor

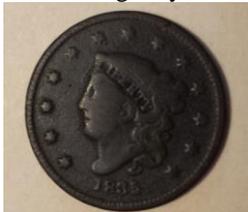
Genna Henderson

Well, the last two months have been busy at Bethesda. The choir's settled in and gotten used to singing together, but they're preparing to bid a fond farewell to Les Richmond, who's decamping for warmer climes (which means they now desperately need a tenor AND a bass, preferably two of each, and a baritone if you've got one handy).

Bill Read, after many faithful years of service on the board of the Home of the Good Shepherd (beginning in 1992), tendered his resignation and was feted with both great joy for his service (and friendship) and great sorrow (over his retirement) at Sperry's where Carolyn Hatch told a fantastic joke. If you ask her to, I bet she'd tell you. Bill has been instrumental in the growth of HGS from its humble beginnings to its current grandeur. He will be sorely missed at board meetings.

The Bethesda Potluck turned out to be a laugh riot from start to finish. The food was delicious, the tables were packed, and the Rector's Quiz was challenging (Who was the first rector of Bethesda? Nobody knew!) and competitive. (Note for future Quizzes: Sit at Gordon Boyd's table.) I'll admit that, after an exhausting couple of weeks, I had to drag myself there, but I'm ever so glad that I did, and I left laughing and energized.

Diane Robinson, who has made it her goal to find some great treasure in the flotsam of the parish house's cupboards and the jetsam of the Ensley house, has discovered an 1835 penny and some stamps from the 1964 Olympiad. The penny, after a brief Googling, is worth about \$16 (way more than a penny, but way less than a new parish hall) and the stamps (originally about \$1) are probably worth about 90 cents now. Keep looking, Diane! We're counting on you!



Important Advent Events!

December 6, 3:00 PM: Lessons and Carols

December 13th: Please bring extra evergreen boughs (the ones you trim from the bottom of your tree, for example) and leave them in the vestibule so we can use them to decorate the church.

December 20th: Confirmation! Please make an extra effort to attend the 10:00 Eucharist to show your support of the young people being confirmed.

December 20th (after the Bishop's reception): Church decorating (with all of those evergreen boughs). Please come and lend a hand!

Everyone is welcome at the annual Bethesda Church School Christmas Pageant (with music and audience sing-along) during coffee hour on Sunday December 13th in the Parish House. Anyone who is interested in participating in the performance should contact either your church school teacher or the parish office. Rehearsal is on Saturday December 12th from 9:00 am to 11:30 am (children 5 years old and under may attend only from 10:00 am to 11:30 am).



The deadline for the next edition of The Voice is Wednesday, January 20th! Please contribute!

Email articles to geneva.k.hinkle@gmail.com

Need a Christmas Gift?

Jane Agee is making available three of her photographs of Bethesda for gift giving.

The prints can be seen on the Bethesda

Facebook page or at

www.bethesdachurch.org

Each print will be on archival paper and have a foam-core backing. You can reserve an 8 x 10 for \$40, or an 11 x 14 for \$60.

All proceeds will go to Bethesda. To reserve your print(s), email your request to agee.jane@gmail.com. The prints can be picked up at Coffee Hour after the 10:00 service on December 13th.