

# The VOICE



of Bethesda

Summer 2019

## Financing and Participation Advance for New Parish House and Community Center

Recent weeks have been full of positive news for the parish's building project and the development of Mercy House of Saratoga.

On Easter 7, Senior Warden Darren Miller announced that "we have received an extremely generous seven-figure pledge from an anonymous donor that will allow us to anticipate groundbreaking on the New Parish House as soon as the funds become available. The donor's pledge will be fulfilled once directors complete a private financial transaction that is pending.

"This pledge is a testimony to the importance of Bethesda's mission with Mercy House and our partners to provide a much-needed housing resource in the center of the Saratoga Community. And without doubt, God's hand is on this project. We will still seek funds from community sources as well, but this new pledge puts us very much in sight of the finish line."

A capital campaign will be mounted later this year to provide the community and others an opportunity to fill out the support for Bethesda's transformative mission and program in its new facility. While this good news was developing, Mercy House continued to fill out the participation of housing partners to fulfill Bethesda's mission. Although the Code Blue program is not in the picture, other agencies requiring temporary and transitional housing are considering occupancy for their clients.

*Gordon Boyd*

## Support BEST's 30th Anniversary Celebration

Mercy House has asked that Bethesda show its support for the community's race track workers by supporting a 30th anniversary celebration of the Backstretch Employee Service Team BEST, which provides health coordination and other needed services to 2,000 backstretch workers. The celebration will be from 8 to 10a.m., July 18, at the Race Course. Flyers will be distributed with details in the coming weeks. The event will honor the venerable announcer and backstretch advocate, Tom Durkin.

"BEST has expressed its great appreciation for Bethesda's and Mercy House's outreach and mission. We want to do everything we can, pending opening our doors formally, to support BEST's amazing work that supports and transforms the lives of so many backstretch workers and families," said Gordon Boyd, President of Mercy House.

## Landon Moore's Reflections



While my time at Yale may have seemed long, it *was* long. It was a long three years for me, with ups and downs, experiences of joy as well as sorrow, stress, and anxiety from academics to everyday life. As you all know, three years ago I enrolled at Yale Divinity School. I knew that it was an academically rigorous environment, but I desired to attend the top seminary within the Episcopal church. Looking back on my experience, it felt as if I went through a rocky waterfall, and after graduating I thought, "What the heck was that?" Let me explain: most days I was wrestling with deep theological and existential questions such as the reality of Being, the omnipotence of God, and Theodicy. I pondered academic writings and engaged in dialogues with colleagues that shook my foundation.

Nevertheless I emerged with a Masters of Divinity, which is in itself a humorous degree. Does that mean I am now a master of the divine? Far from it. Instead, I left with more questions unanswered than answered.

Yet after all the essays, all the books, and all the articles read over the last three years, I want to share with you what I know for sure. There is a God who created us, trillions, billions, five thousand years ago whatever it may be. This God, whose name is "I Am," desires an intimate relationship with each and every one of us and has revealed Godself to the world because of the intense desire to know us. Yet we turned away. Creation turned away and kept turning away. On a physical level, we've turned away by continuing to fight with one another. How many wars have there been over time? We've turned away by being cynical toward one another, holding onto what is ours so tightly while others are without. We've turned away, but it is

God who keeps coming, inviting us back into relationship because God chose us and loves us.

God sent Godself to us, whose name is Jesus the Christ. For God so loved the world that he gave his only son to suffer and die on the cross. Only on the cross does one die with hands stretched out embracing the creation, allowing it to come and witness its creator. This is not a new revelation but a truth that has driven me to try as best as I can, as a fallible human being, to embody God's love to all creation, as well as call all to embody God's love by using their resources, talents, and gifts for the glory of God.

I have chosen to use my life—the talents God has given me—to be an ambassador for Christ, as we are all called to do on some level. Confessing that God came to earth, breathed this air, ate and drank with friends, tax collectors, gluttons, drunkards, saying, “I will go to the cross and take the place of humanity because I love them so much that I am willing to sacrifice my life for all of them.” Once that revelation sunk in, I wasn't the same. You and I aren't the same once that revelation hits you.

I have accepted a call as an associate rector at the Church of Saint Mark in Brooklyn. I will oversee the youth, young adults and family ministries. In addition to being an associate rector, I will be teaching religious education in Saint Mark's Day School to sixth, seventh and eighth graders. I am excited about this opportunity to be part of Saint Mark's Church and the Diocese of Long Island. But most importantly, I am passionate about the opportunity God has given me to continue shaping the lives of the youth and young adults. I have accepted a tremendous responsibility, but I feel confident and excited to continue this journey God has called me to.

I am forever grateful for the love and support from my Bethesda parish family. Since I was a young boy growing up in the church, I have felt welcomed, and I will forever call Bethesda home. Accepting a call to a new church means that I will have infrequent opportunities to come back to Bethesda in the future, but please feel free to contact me if you need anything. My sermons are on YouTube, pictures of where I am and what I am doing are on Facebook or Instagram, and my

email is [revmoorelandon@gmail.com](mailto:revmoorelandon@gmail.com). Always feel free to reach out. In Christ, Landon

## Christian Education News

Bethesda's Church School had a lovely end of the year celebration on June 9, which included the distribution of recognition certificates at the 10 o'clock service and a cake for all to enjoy during coffee hour. This summer, our students can attend Vacation Bible School (VBS) at Christ Episcopal Church in Ballston Spa on July 15-19. In addition, we are working with the First Baptist Church to create a combined VBS for another week this summer. Please contact the church office for further details.

*Sara Manny*

## From the Interim Rector's Study

My Dear People and Friends of Bethesda:

The news I am about to share with you is most current. Upon returning from Diocesan Convention on the afternoon of June 8, The Reverend Landon Moore shared with me that a date for his Ordination to the Sacred Priesthood has been confirmed. Please note in your calendars Saturday, August 24, the Feast of Saint Bartholomew the Apostle. The liturgy will be celebrated at Saint Mark's Episcopal Church in Brooklyn, the very parish where Landon will commence his ministry as Curate on July 1. As I mentioned in recent Sunday announcements, I would very much like to charter a bus to take Bethesda members south to share in this momentous occasion. Once definitive information becomes available, a sign-up list for the round trip journey will be made available in the narthex. Traveling via a charter vehicle is wise and safer than opting for individual cars.

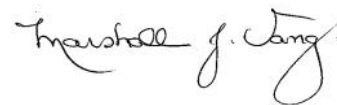
A growing number of residents from Prestwick Chase, a Saratoga Springs retirement community, have been attending a Sunday Eucharist at Bethesda. The time is now appropriate to discuss with the community's leadership whether or not a monthly weekday worship opportunity from our parish would be appropriate. Presently, no other religious family from our city makes such a commitment. To extend Bethesda's outreach ministry beyond our presence at the Homes of the Good

Shepherd in Saratoga Springs and Wilton is a worthy endeavor.

Between June 30 and September 8 we welcome volunteers to serve as lectors at both the eight and ten o'clock Masses. Personally, I look forward to seeing new faces who are willing and able to share the Word of God with us on these occasions. -Please do not be shy.

May Our Lord richly bless our summer recreation and other endeavors in which we choose to participate.

Most cordially and gratefully,



The Very Reverend Marshall J. Vang  
Interim Rector

## Help Needed!

The Altar Guild is looking for help at the 8 am and 10 am Sunday services. Please call Mary Withington at 518-584-0253.

## The Rector Search Process

As I reported at the annual parish meeting at the end of January, we received only a small number of applicants to become of the next rector of Bethesda. That number became even smaller when two of them accepted calls to become rectors of other parishes. The search committee conducted preliminary interviews with all the candidates and then chose two of its number to meet with the candidates in person. We checked the references of these two candidates. We have decided to ask both to come to Saratoga Springs to meet with the entire search committee as well as the bishop. They will also have the opportunity to see the church, the rectory, the Saratoga Homes of the Good Shepherd, and the community. In addition, they will conduct a service, including preaching, for the search committee only. Diocesan policies for conducting searches require us to limit the people who meet with the candidates to members of the search committee only in order to maintain confidentiality. Please feel free to contact me or any other member of the vestry if you have any questions about the search process. More importantly, please pray for the success of our search.

*Kate Berheide, Junior Warden*

## Parish Finances

Weekly averages	
April plate and pledge	\$5,184
May plate and pledge	\$2,787
To meet budget in 2019	\$5,000

## Offering Envelopes

The switch in January 2019 to a new envelope company was very smooth. If you would like to start using envelopes, call 518-584-5980, or email [office@bethesdachurch.org](mailto:office@bethesdachurch.org) to make these arrangements. There are always blank offering envelopes available in the back of the church.

## A History of Bethesda Episcopal Church: Worship and Healing in Saratoga Springs, New York

This beautiful book is available for purchase. The hardcover book traces the fascinating history of Bethesda and its significance to Saratoga Springs and New York from its founding in 1830 to the present. It features a trove of photographs including color plates. To order your copy, use the online link: <http://bethesdachurch.org/order-a-history-of-bethesda>

## A Rich Experience of Christian Giving

I want to introduce you to Olsi, a 13-year-old boy who lives in Durrës, Albania's bustling main seaport. And I want to introduce you to World Vision International (WVI), the organization that brought Olsi and me together. The purpose of the WVI program is to assure Olsi, and every participating child, the best possible future, with good health and nutrition, education, and economic potential. But there has been an unexpected benefit: my life has been immeasurably enriched by a relationship with a young person.

It all started with soccer balls. World Vision publishes a catalogue that offers donors the opportunity to help children and their families by underwriting a vast range of necessities and services including clothing, school supplies, farm animals, hunger relief, refugee assistance, medicine. As a passionate soccer player I liked the idea of providing balls for children who played only with makeshift balls. About seven years ago I started sending occasional checks for this purpose.

Then I started thinking about the injunction in Matthew 25: "For when I was hungry, you gave me food..." World Vision's best-known program is Child Sponsorship. I realized my charitable giving had been focused on the operational needs of my congregation, occasional capital fund-raising, and the odd check sent to Episcopal Relief and Development or American Friends Service Committee after one of the increasingly-frequent natural disasters.

That wasn't enough. I decided to become a sponsor.

I have long been interested in the history and geography of Albania, a small nation on the Adriatic Sea north of Greece. World Vision works there, so I went on its website to choose a child to sponsor. I narrowed my choice by looking for a soccer-playing boy about eight - old enough to write but young enough to not "age out" for a decade. I settled on Olsi who, it turned out, comes from a stable and loving extended family, just one with limited economic opportunity.

A few months later, and a few \$39 monthly charges to my credit card, I was on my way to Albania, a trip I had dreamed of since communism ended in 1991. World Vision arranged a day's visit with Olsi and his family. He spoke no English and he was clearly uncertain how to relate to this exotic American grownup. When we parted I gave him his very own soccer ball, and his shyness evaporated instantly.

Over the past four years our letters back and forth, translated by World Vision, have helped us to get acquainted. So when I planned another, longer, tour of Albania, a visit with Olsi was foremost. This time there was no shyness at all, and to my delight he even addressed a question to me in perfect English.

As a childless older adult, I am receiving just as much as I am giving. For the first time in my life there is a young person I can encourage and mentor. Olsi is an A/A+ student now, as he begins eighth grade, and I have resolved to help him with his university education. World Vision's child sponsorship is, at its heart, one person befriending another, rather than the traditional "Lady Bountiful" style of bestowing charity on willing (or unwilling) recipients. Although we live 5,000 miles apart, Olsi signs letters,

"Your best friend," and you can be sure I intend to fulfill that trust.

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization, but as they used to say about Levy's Jewish Rye, you don't have to be a practicing Christian to take part in this work. Aid is given regardless of race, creed or ethnicity of the recipients. It works with other religious organizations such as Islamic Relief, and with secular bodies as well. Its audit record is spotless, and fully 86% of its total funds are expended on programs.

A few highlights: its clean water program plans to provide clean water for all rural residents in 25 countries by 2030. Its nutrition program has provided food assistance to 8.8 million in 33 countries. Child protection initiatives (efforts to end trafficking, child labor, and other forces that rob children of their childhood) have helped 10.2 million in one year. And, at this moment, 3.3 million children worldwide are enrolled in WVI sponsorship programs.

Please consider becoming a sponsor for \$39 a month to guarantee a child a better future. Go to <https://donate.worldvision.org/>.

*Field Horne*



Field Horne with Olsi

Bethesda Episcopal Church  
43 Washington Street  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

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*If you no longer wish to be on our mailing list, please contact the Parish Office at (518) 584-5980.*

### Weekly Parish Schedule

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#### Sunday

7:30 A.M. Morning Prayer  
8 A.M. Holy Eucharist  
10 A.M. Sung Eucharist

#### Tuesday

6:30 A.M. Holy Eucharist

#### Wednesday

12:10 P.M. Holy Eucharist with healing, *Transept Altar*  
10:00 A.M. (1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> weeks)  
Holy Eucharist: *Home of The Good Shepherd Wilton.*

#### Thursday

9:30 A.M. Holy Eucharist, *Home of the Good Shepherd, Saratoga*  
10:00 A.M. Holy Eucharist, *Home of the Good Shepherd Memory Care, Saratoga*

### Upcoming Bethesda Celebrations

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#### Saturday, August 24, 11 a.m.

**Ordination of The Reverend Landon Moore to the Sacred Priesthood.**

The liturgy will be celebrated at Saint Mark's Episcopal Church in Brooklyn, the very parish where Landon will commence his ministry as Curate on July 1.

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