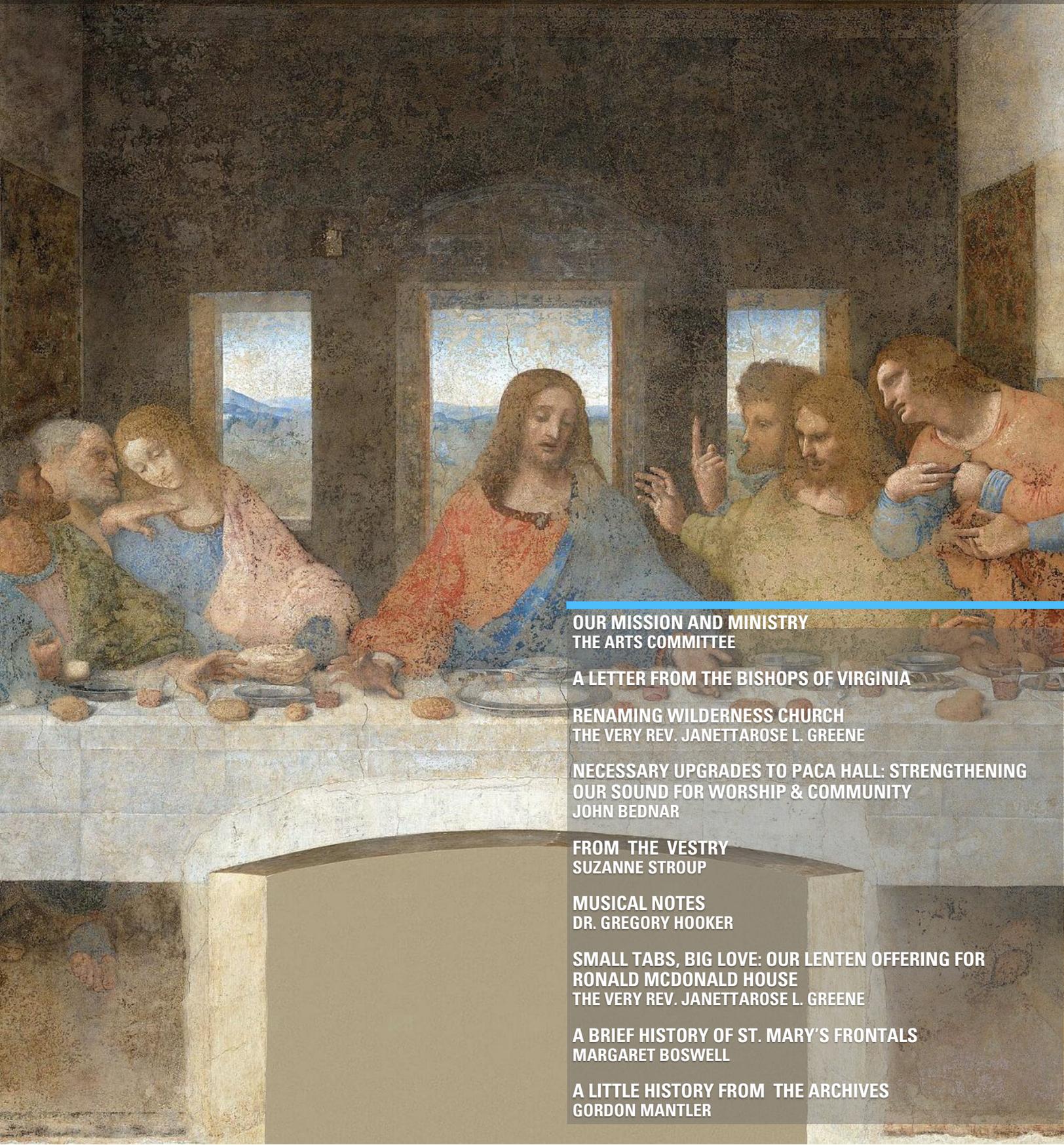




MARCH 2026

MESSENGER



OUR MISSION AND MINISTRY
THE ARTS COMMITTEE

A LETTER FROM THE BISHOPS OF VIRGINIA

RENAMING WILDERNESS CHURCH
THE VERY REV. JANETTAROSE L. GREENE

**NECESSARY UPGRADES TO PACA HALL: STRENGTHENING
OUR SOUND FOR WORSHIP & COMMUNITY**
JOHN BEDNAR

FROM THE VESTRY
SUZANNE STROUP

MUSICAL NOTES
DR. GREGORY HOOKER

**SMALL TABS, BIG LOVE: OUR LENTEN OFFERING FOR
RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE**
THE VERY REV. JANETTAROSE L. GREENE

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ST. MARY'S FRONTALS
MARGARET BOSWELL

A LITTLE HISTORY FROM THE ARCHIVES
GORDON MANTLER



CONTACT INFORMATION

phone: 703.527.6800
email: office@stmarysarlington.org
www.stmarysarlington.org

**The Rev. Meg Ingalls
Interim Rector**

meg@stmarysarlington.org
703.527.6800, ext. 306

**The Very Rev. Janettarose L. Greene
Senior Associate to the Rector**

janettarose@stmarysarlington.org
703.527.6800, ext. 316

**The Rev. Nicole Lambelet
Associate to the Rector**

nicole@stmarysarlington.org
703.527.6800, ext. 308

The Rev. Dr. Kate Sonderegger, Priest Associate

ksonderegger@vts.edu

Zach Ferguson, VTS Seminarian

zach@stmarysarlington.org

Dr. Gregory Hooker, Music Minister

gregory@stmarysarlington.org
703.527.6800, ext. 314

Gariné Adams, Wilderness Worship Leader

garineadams@gmail.com

Dr. Matt Gabay, Volunteer Associate Organist

mgabay75@gmail.com

Jackie Vigil, Youth and Family Formation Minister

jackie@stmarysarlington.org
703.527.6800, ext. 319

**Derek Greten-Harrison
Parish Administrator & Communications Director**

derek@stmarysarlington.org
703.527.6800, ext. 315

Prosper Daziorlor, Facilities Manager

prosper@stmarysarlington.org
703.527.6800, ext. 322

Kelly Marcellus, Finance Manager

kelly@stmarysarlington.org
703.527.6800, ext. 307

John Bednar, IT Support and Live Stream

john@stmarysarlington.org

Deborah Gandy, Volunteer Treasurer

THE DIOCESE OF VIRGINIA

The Right Reverend E. Mark Stevenson
Bishop of Virginia

The Right Reverend Gayle Elizabeth Harris
Assistant Bishop of Virginia

The Right Reverend Mark Boulakas
Assistant Bishop of Virginia

ST. MARY'S VESTRY

Suzanne Stroup (2027) *Sr. Warden*

Chris Jennings (2026) *Jr. Warden*

Melissa Wiley (2026) *Register*

Alec Hicks (2026)

Michael Devine (2027)

Campbell Hutton (2027)

Paul Douthit (2028)

Gordon Mantler (2028)

Jessica Whatley (2028)

STAY CONNECTED



Cover: Leonardo da Vinci, *The Last Supper*, c.1495-98,
Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan (detail).

Messenger is published monthly by
St. Mary's Episcopal Church
2609 N. Glebe Rd., Arlington, VA 22207



A MESSAGE FROM MOTHER MEG

Dear Friends,

Galli Cantu is the name of the church just outside the walls of Jerusalem which captures my imagination at this time of the year. Translated as The Rooster Crows, the church is the place of the courtyard where Peter denied Jesus three times, the courtyard before the palace containing the basement prison where Jesus was taken and beaten prior to his crucifixion.



We begin Lent with such a solemnity of ashes reminding us of the thin veil that separates life and death. The Great Litany of the First Sunday in Lent reminds us that God hears us when we call. The Penitential Order of the other Sundays in Lent recall the covenant we made with God to obey his commandments that Yahweh might be our God and we God's people.

Living out the Ten Commandments is difficult. Most of us don't murder those around us, but we sometimes do other things that we wish we hadn't done. Sometimes I think we live more in hopeful disobedience than in true righteousness with our Lord. At least that's the way it is for me.



As we shift the scene from Galli Cantu to St. Mary's, we find a full array of ways to bring us through the veil. We discuss how to *Love Your Neighbor with Mercy* in our Sunday forum hour, we celebrate the gifts given the parish in our art exhibit, we continue to introduce new programming for our kids and teens and their parents and for our 20/30-somethings, as well as our various outreach ministries. Upcoming mission trips and pilgrimages in 2026 include the Teen Trip to New Bern, the Adult trip to Tanzania, and the pilgrimage to Greece (with a side of Turkey). St. Mary's calls us into a covenant of participating in life here at church, within our community, and throughout the world. St. Mary's is called into relationship—and not into denial—of our companionship with others.

May this Lenten season be less a time of fasting from something and more of a finding joy in something, of living not in denial but in anticipation. Take a step toward living in covenant with our God during this holy season.

Blessings,

FROM THE ARTS COMMITTEE: *OUR MISSION AND MINISTRY*

The visual arts are a vital part of our spiritual lives, Christian formation, and ministries. Think of SIGHTS, such as our stained glass lighting up the sanctuary; the altar hangings and flowers, evoking the beauty of holiness; the power of the Stations of the Cross, offering a graphic reminder of Christ's Passion on our behalf. These complement the other art forms that guide us in worship and prayer: MUSIC, with texts that instruct and delight and console us, and melodies that echo our joys and sorrows; WORDS, from altar and pulpit and lectern, that nourish, comfort, inspire, and restore us. The St Mary's Arts Committee lifts up the "voice" of the visual arts in our parish life in a number of ways.

Throughout the year you will see art exhibits in the Merrow Fellowship Center commemorating important symbols, events, and people as we begin celebrating "100 Years of Love in Action." In collaboration with the 100th Anniversary Committee, the first exhibit, *Echoes of Grace: The Art of Remembrance*, marks the start of the 100th anniversary celebration. It celebrates the memorials given to St Mary's. Together we will present three additional exhibitions to celebrate mission work, the saints of the parish, and care of creation. For each exhibit, we invite parishioners to contribute their own pieces. St Mary's is blessed with many talented parishioners; more are still being discovered.

We organize weekend field trips to downtown museums, often with follow-up discussions over lunch. We have pondered Marc Rothko's contemplative and mysterious paintings; Bruce Onobrakpeya's linoleum print Stations of the Cross, set in his native Nigeria; and Elizabeth Catlett's powerful prints and sculptures exploring themes of racial justice.

The next trip will be to the Washington National Cathedral on Thursday, March 12, at 6:30 pm to see the premiere screening of the movie *The Creation Rose*. It tells the story of the design and construction of the stained glass window at the west end of the Cathedral by Rowan LeCompte. Order tickets [here](#) or via this QR code.



The Committee assists the rector by assessing proposed art gifts to St Mary's and making a recommendation to the clergy and vestry based on our evaluation of the art and consideration of the ways that the gift might enhance our parish life. The most recent instance was Amy Graham's offer of four woodcut prints of Old Testament prophets by Yankel Ginsburg. We researched the artist, discussed where the images might be displayed, how they might be used in our Biblical and Social Justice formation, and visited Amy's home with Mother Meg to see the prints in person. We were delighted to be able to recommend that St. Mary's accept this generous gift, which will debut later in the year.

The arts compliment our worship, prayer, and fellowship, and help bring the body of Christ together, strengthen our relationships, and express our creative gifts. We greatly appreciate your support in this endeavor!

Paul Douthit – Chair and Vestry Liaison
Gregory Hooker – Staff Liaison
Leslie Ann Gerardo
Miriam Keeler
Colleen Mason (honorary member)
Peggy Parker

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, ARLINGTON

100th Anniversary Exhibitions



24 May 2026

Show Us How to Serve

4 Oct 2026

*God's Love Made Them
Strong*

7 Feb 2027

*Love and Protect God's
Creation*

**St. Mary's Episcopal Church
Merrow Fellowship Center**

Open from 9 AM - 4 PM



2609 N. Glebe Road, Arlington, VA | www.stmarysarlington.org



A LETTER FROM THE BISHOPS OF VIRGINIA

Dear Friends in Christ –

The world awoke on Saturday to the violence of war – to attack, and retaliation, and blame, and counteraccusation. Questions were quickly asked, and assertions just as quickly made. And through it all, lives are ended, or changed forever.

We, the bishops of Virginia, ask us all to set aside partisanship in this moment and remember that the majority of those lives are often innocent ones. Children will be orphaned, spouses will be widowed, and parents will be left to bury their daughters and sons. The effects of war know no nationality, creed, religion, or family relation – death and pain strike all equally. And through it all, God weeps at the suffering.

We urge the people of the Diocese of Virginia to read and take to heart the Anglican Archbishop of Jerusalem’s [pastoral letter](#) issued Saturday morning; to heed his call to pray for peace and to anchor our hearts in the spirit of love; and to remember that as Christians we are called by Jesus himself to see those who differ from us as neighbor and not as enemy.

We urge the faith communities of this diocese to find ways to put prayer into action – to embody justice. Gather, discern, speak out, put your resources to work to call the world to the love of Jesus. These are days that demand no less.

May God be with you and yours, and with the people of the Middle East, this day and always.

The Rt. Rev. E. Mark Stevenson
The Rt. Rev. Gayle E. Harris
The Rt. Rev. Mark A. Bourlakas

DISCOVER GREECE: *IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF PAUL THE APOSTLE*

October 13-23, 2026

Over the years I have led pilgrims on sundry adventures. We have traveled to places like Israel, Egypt, and Jordan, Greece, Turkey, and even Ethiopia. Greece is my favorite country with its classic columns and archeological digs, its ancient culture mixed with an orthodox faith, its monasteries, and its islands. And Ephesus in Turkey!—it is a breathtaking archeological paradise.

I would like to invite you to come with me on this adventure. You can view the brochure via the QR code below to discover the length and breadth of the trip, the cost, and how to sign up. I hope to share fun and fellowship with you on this spiritual journey.

Blessings,



RENAMING WILDERNESS CHURCH

by The Very Rev. Janettarose L. Greene

“See, I am making all things new.” - Revelation 21:1-6

We are excited to share an important and joyful update in the life of St. Mary’s! After prayerful discernment, Wilderness Church has been renamed Praise in the Park, and the Wild Band is now the Rippling Waters Band.

These new names reflect both who we are and who we are becoming. While “Wilderness Church” and the “Wild Band” beautifully captured the spirit of new beginnings, we sensed that God was inviting us into language that more clearly expresses our mission and identity. “Praise in the Park” highlights the heart of this ministry: joyful, Spirit-filled worship in an open, welcoming space. The “Rippling Waters Band” evokes the living waters of baptism and the widening circles of God’s love flowing outward into our community.

Praise in the Park gathers in Zachary Taylor Park on the first and third Sundays of each month, offering an accessible, vibrant expression of worship beyond our church walls. We are grateful for the many ways this ministry continues to grow and for the neighbors, friends, and pets who join us in singing, praying, and fellowship.

Renaming our worship group affirms that the Spirit is with us and that we are listening. Our new names remind us that we are not a performance but a witness. Not an event but an invitation.

Come and discover what God is unfolding at Praise in the Park.



NECESSARY UPGRADES TO PACA HALL: STRENGTHENING OUR SOUND FOR WORSHIP AND COMMUNITY

by John Bednar, St. Mary's IT Specialist

Over the past several years, Paca Hall has become an increasingly active and vibrant space for our parish life. From fellowship gatherings and ministry meetings to concerts, formation classes, and community events, this room carries the sound of our shared life together. To better support these ministries, we are undergoing a much-needed upgrade to Paca Hall's sound system.

WHAT HAS BEEN IMPROVED?

A New Equipment Rack

The new equipment rack provides a safer, more organized, and more reliable home for our audio components. This allows for better airflow, easier troubleshooting, and improved longevity of our equipment.

New Wiring

Outdated wiring was replaced to ensure clearer sound, improved signal strength, and greater reliability. This upgrade reduces interference and enhances overall audio quality; something everyone will notice whether speaking, teaching, or performing.

Six New Speakers

Six new speakers will be installed, providing more even sound distribution throughout Paca Hall.

This means:

- Clearer speech during meetings and presentations
- Better musical balance during rehearsals and performances
- More consistent volume throughout the room
- No more straining to hear from the back or being overwhelmed in the front.

Why This Matters

Good sound is not just about technology; it is about hospitality. When people can hear clearly, they feel included. When music carries well, worship deepens. When community events run smoothly, relationships flourish.

This upgrade ensures that Paca Hall continues to serve our parish and the wider community with excellence for years to come.

Thank you to all who helped make this improvement possible. Your generosity and care for our shared spaces strengthen our ministry in ways both seen and heard.



A MESSAGE FROM MARJORIE GREEN & VOICE

Federal funding cuts and a challenging local budget outlook are threatening the future of successful, free after-school programs for at-risk kids in underserved communities — at a time when these children need safe, structured, supportive out-of-school programs more than ever.

Please join St. Mary's leaders in VOICE and 200+ other Arlington residents at a public assembly on Friday evening, March 27th, to show County Board members the broad community support of funding for afterschool programs for these children.

When: Friday, March 27th, 7 - 8:15 pm

Where: Kenmore Middle School,
200 S. Carlin Springs Rd.

Questions? Marjorie Green, vagreenfam@verizon.net

KEEP KIDS LEARNING



MARCH 27, 2026

CALL TO ACTION

Join after-school providers, youth, parents, advocates, and elected officials to stand up for safe, high-quality after-school programs for all Arlington kids. Pizza and drinks will be provided.

WHEN & WHERE

Kenmore Middle School
200 S Carlin Springs Rd,
Arlington, VA 22204

March 27, 2026 • 7:00 PM



ANNOUNCING LENTEN FOOD DRIVE

During Lent, St. Mary's is joining with the Episcopal churches in Arlington in a special food collection for AFAC (Arlington Food Assistance Center). We share in AFAC's mission to feed our neighbors in need. These are the foods most in need: cereal, canned fruit, peanut butter (in plastic jars), jelly (in plastic jars), canned soup, canned chicken, and canned tuna. Put donations in the AFAC food collection box between now and March 21. Together, our churches are helping feed the hungry in Arlington!





FROM THE VESTRY

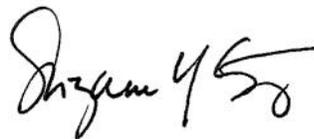
Suzanne Stroup, Senior Warden

As I sit quietly writing during this second week of Lent, the skies are gray and the temperature gauge continues to tease us with hints of Spring. The birds are calling us to recognize the change in the air, even as the snow from January 24th still remains as mounds of dirt and ice across the landscape. It all feels like a time of waiting for what's to come, a time to live in patience and prayer, to seek out and know where God is inviting us into deeper relationship with one another and our faith. Even still, before we know it, Good Friday and Easter will be upon us. I hope you can take full advantage of our many Lenten offerings, whether through our Sunday Forum Series, bible studies, food drives and distributions, and the Lenten Clean-Up Day on Saturday, March 21st. All are excellent ways to intentionally prepare yourselves for what lies ahead in the life of our faith and church.

In addition to engaging in our Lenten and Easter programming, I would ask you to mark your calendars now for our upcoming Annual Meeting on April 26th, at 9 am in the Paca Hall. If you're new to St. Mary's, the Annual Meeting provides a thorough snapshot of where we are as a parish,

how we have grown, and what many our ministries are doing. We will also commission our new Discernment Committee members who, with the help of the Diocese, will conduct our search for St. Mary's new rector. Lastly, we will elect three new Vestry members to lead us in the years ahead, as we thank our retiring members for their steadfast dedication over these last three years. St. Mary's has had a remarkable year of transition under the leadership of Mother Meg Ingalls and our incredible clergy and staff. I welcome you to join us in reviewing just how far we have come as a "parish in transition" and help us share and celebrate the road map for the year ahead.

Please know that we are all praying for one another and our neighbors in this season of quiet searching, reflection, and discernment. As always, if you have questions, suggestions, or even concerns to share, your Vestry is here and would love to speak with you. Please reach out to any of us and we will welcome the opportunity to know, listen, and learn. Thank you!

Faithfully, 

SAVE THE DATE FOR REBUILDING TOGETHER: APRIL 25, 2026!



THE CREATION ROSE World Premiere Screening

A film by
Peter Swanson

**A Gothic Cathedral
Meets a Modern Artist**

Featuring:

**Rowan LeCompte
Dieter Goldkuhle**

In 1942, amid the soaring halls of Washington Cathedral, architect Philip Frohman encountered a 16-year-old boy from Baltimore whose raw talent, he believed, could revolutionize the art of stained glass. Decades later that boy, Rowan LeCompte, would transform the very cathedral that first inspired him. This story of a stained-glass masterpiece reveals the passion, persistence, and vulnerability behind great art.

Thursday, March 12th 6:30 PM

At Washington National Cathedral

Scan the QR code for tickets or go to:

<https://www.ticketleap.events/tickets/wwwglobalvizcom/the-creation-rose-world-premier>



MUSICAL NOTES

by Dr. Gregory Hooker

THE FUTURE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PROGRESS: ORGAN PIPE INSTALLATION

When St. Mary's organ was installed in 1998, there were insufficient funds to complete the last two sets of pipes for the design. Our Funding the Future Capital Campaign provided funds for the completion of the organ. The first of the two sets of pipes to be added was installed last year. The last set of pipes was installed mid-February (see photos).

We will rededicate the organ and demonstrate the new pipes at Music Ministry Sunday, May 31, 2026. There will also be an organ recital by concert artist and composer Brenda Portman on October 23, 2026 as part of our 100th Anniversary Celebration. For more information about the completion of St. Mary's Organ, a brief video can be found [here](#) or by scanning this QR code.



THE FUTURE OF MUSIC LEADERSHIP AT ST. MARY'S

As we prepare for the next chapter of ministry at St. Mary's, strengthening and growing our music program is a joyful priority. If you love to sing or would like to explore your voice, we invite you to consider joining the choir. Choir members serve the whole parish by leading worship, shaping the sound of our liturgy, and offering beauty and prayer through music. Rehearsals are a time of learning, collaboration, and shared purpose as we grow together in skill and confidence. If you would like to add your voice to this vibrant ministry, please contact Dr. Hooker (gregory@stmarysarlington.org) to learn more about the exciting opportunities that await you in one of our choirs.

HOW CAN WE WORSHIP TOGETHER?

Paraphrasing hymn writer Paul Gerhardt in his heartrending Holy Week hymn "O Sacred Head, now wounded," what is the language that we use to thank Jesus for his life and passion of love? The answer is any language that communicates the depths of our feeling in a way that requires something of us to create and offer back to God. The musical language or languages that we use in worship can come from a variety of sources, times, and places, reflecting the Church's wider community of faith and not just personal preferences. What unites them all is an authenticity between the music and the words that enhances our prayers, articulates our praise, and enriches our proclamation of the Word.

When music stands alone apart from words, it expresses more of an inward sense of how the music and our ideas about God, church, and prayer intersect. This intersection is inevitably more personal and sub-

jective than music with a text that coordinates with the scripture readings of the day. But because of the abstract nature of instrumental music we are free to explore, contemplate, and imagine how God is at work within us.

There are points at which these two contrasting ideas—music in support of a text and music that is free from concrete ideas—can overlap: for example, when we repeat “Alleluia,” or when the organ interjects its own message as commentary into a text sung by the choir. In many ways this is the moment we often yearn for in music: when the sung word takes us to a place beyond words, where God himself is present with us, not with a word of comfort or rebuke, but simply with us.

In our desire for this union with God we must not mistake the musical experience for a sacrament. God is present with us continually through the gift of the Holy Spirit at our Baptism. We meet Christ in the Eucharist. We speak to God in prayer with or without the aid of music. The mode is not to be worshipped, and worshipping in different settings with music and without music can serve as a reminder that God is the focus, not the music. Music is a unique and multi-faceted blessing, but it is merely the means by which we exercise our devotion, thanksgiving, and sacrifice to the One who has devoted, blessed, and given so much to us.



**5TH ANNUAL BACH BIRTHDAY MARATHON AT ST. ALBAN’S, ANNANDALE
MARCH 22, 2026 | 4:00PM**

An afternoon of short performances of organ works of J. S. Bach by local artists on St. Alban’s beautiful (and recently restored) mechanical action organ (John Leek, Op. 1). Audience members can drop in and depart at will, and when the marathon ends around 6:00 pm, concertgoers and musicians will continue to celebrate Johann Sebastian with a festive reception, where beer and German fare will be served. Dr. Gregory Hooker will perform a 20-minute portion of this concert at St. Alban’s, 6800 Columbia Pike, Annandale.

CELEBRATE ST. MARY’S 100TH ANNIVERSARY!

OUR CENTENNIAL ONLINE STOREFRONT IS NOW LIVE!



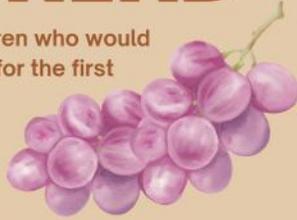
JOIN us for a special workshop on the Eucharist. We will make bread together for Communion on Sunday 3.15 and learn more about why we celebrate the life of Jesus with this special meal.



MARCH 14
9:30-11:00 AM

COME & BAKE THIS BREAD

We especially welcome all children who would like to participate in communion for the first time at our 2026 Easter services



REGISTER VIA QR CODE OR EMAIL:
NICOLE@STMARYSARLINGTON.ORG



FAMILY FORMATION

Monthly Saturday morning gatherings for the whole family

9:30 am - 11:00 am in Paca Hall

- ✓ **February 21:** Join Rachel A. Oakes, Ph.D for a timely conversation about teen mental health and wellness. Oakes is a clinical psychologist at Virginia Therapy and Wellness in Fairfax, VA. She will give a presentation for parents invested in deepening their support of the teens and teens in their care.
- ✓ **March 14:** Rev. Nicole will offer a special workshop for families on the theology and practice of the Eucharist. This workshop is particularly designed for children and families. We especially welcome all children who would like to participate in communion for the first time at our Easter celebration in 2026.
- ✓ **April 25:** St. Mary's families with children who are too young to participate in our annual Rebuilding Together event are invited to St. Mary's to support this ministry and help prepare lunch for the Rebuilding Together volunteers.

*Children and youth attending the events will rotate through a variety of fun activities such as arts/crafts, music with Dr. H., and bread making!

Questions? Email: Nicole@stmarysarlington.org

Soup and Soul Work



Discernment of spirits for these times



Lent is the 40-day period of reflection, repentance, and renewal leading up to Easter. This year, young adults at St. Mary's Arlington and St. George's Arlington are invited to observe the season together on the first four Monday nights in March (3/2; 3/9; 3/16; 3/23) from 6:30-8:00 pm.

This formation group will explore the practices of discernment according to the Ignatian tradition: building skills to recognize the ways God is active in the world and in the "movements of the soul." We'll gather at the home of the Rev. Nicole (St. Mary's) and Dr. Kyle Lambelet (Ethics Professor at Virginia Theological Seminary) in Alexandria. Address is provided upon registration.



Use the QR Code below to RSVP or email Becky Fulton (beckyfulton@gmail.com) or the Rev. Nicole Lambelet (nicole@stmarysarlington.org) with questions.



We look forward to you joining us for soup and conversation during this important season in God's church!



COME JOIN US!

LENTEN CLEAN-UP DAY

Saturday, March 21, 9 am-12 pm

Join the St. Joseph's Ministry and fellow parishioners to help prepare the church for the Easter season. Tasks include polishing pews, general cleaning, dusting, ladder work, mulching, minor repairs and much more.

All ages and skill levels are welcome. Snacks will be provided; please remember to bring a water bottle.

Sign up on the Parish Hub!

SMALL TABS, BIG LOVE:

OUR LENTEN OFFERING FOR RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

by The Very Rev. Janettarose L. Greene

Throughout this holy season of Lent, we are continuing our collection of pull tabs for the Ronald McDonald House Charities, and what may seem like a small and simple act is, in fact, a powerful expression of compassion.



Ronald McDonald House provides housing, meals, and support for families whose children are receiving medical treatment far from home. In moments of fear and uncertainty, it becomes a place of rest, dignity, and hope. The aluminum pull tabs we collect are recycled, and the proceeds help offset the cost of housing families so they can stay close to their hospitalized child without financial burden.

Why pull tabs? They are small, easy to save, and surprisingly valuable when gathered together. In community, what one person might overlook becomes something meaningful. It is a beautiful image of the Body of Christ; each small offering gathered into something that blesses others.

During Lent, we are invited to pray, fast, and give. Often, we think of sacrifice as giving something up. But Lent also invites us to take on something, to practice intentional generosity, and to choose habits that turn our hearts outward.

Saving pull tabs becomes a daily, tangible reminder that love is not abstract. It is practiced. It is collected one small act at a time.

Every time you open a can of soda or feed your pet, you have a choice: discard it or redeem it. In that small moment, we participate in God's larger redemption, transforming what might be thrown away into support for families walking through some of the hardest days of their lives.

This is how Lent reshapes us. Not only through grand gestures, but through steady faithfulness.

Thank you for continuing to bring your pull tabs to church. Place them in the collection containers in either Paca Hall or the Merrow Fellowship Center. Invite your neighbors and coworkers to join you. Together, our small sacrifices become a sign of Christ's love, which is practical, hopeful, and shared.

Small tabs. Big love. A Lenten practice that makes room for families to stay close when it matters most.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF ST. MARY'S FRONTALS

by Margaret Boswell

At the beginning of WWII, my grandfather used the family's precious gasoline to drive weekly to the nearest Catholic Church. My Baptist grandmother walked with my mother and aunt to the nearest protestant church, which happened to be St. Mary's. This is how my family came to be Episcopalians. Soon after, my grandmother joined the altar guild.

Since joining the Altar Guild myself in the late 1980s, I have had the privilege of working with the beautiful vestments and frontals that have historically been given as memorial gifts to St. Mary's. A frontal is the decorative cloth that covers the altar, changing with the liturgical seasons. Each season and feast day is represented by a unique color. Many of our frontals also have a motif embroidered in the center: a cross, the Easter lilies, or a dove. This purposely draws our eyes to the focal point of worship: the altar, the vested chalice awaiting the Eucharist, and the cross hanging directly above.

When my sister Nancy got married in 1990, our mother shared her memories of the altar guild meeting in homes, sewing together the original tapestry frontal. We can see in photographs that this frontal was on the altar when our parents were



married (*left*). Nancy decided to have the tapestry on the altar for her wedding too, honoring our grandmother.

In 1993, my parents, John and Claudia Boswell, in celebration of their 40th wedding anniversary, chose to have a frontal made and given to St. Mary's in

thanksgiving (*right*). The longest seasons of the church year are represented by the color green. That same tapestry frontal was used for the "green" seasons. My mother and I decided to have a solid green frontal made that could be used as an alternate, hoping to extend the life of the tapestry. Altar guild members Ann Dulaney and Day Dodson designed and sewed the matching vestments for the clergy, completing the set.



Since the early 2000s, I have been tasked with slowly replacing our frontal sets as they became older and more fragile. That original tapestry frontal was one of the first to be replaced, using equally beautiful fabric from Italy, that seemed to be a perfect match. When the much beloved Easter frontal with the lilies in the center needed to be replaced, we didn't see how the design could be improved. The company we worked with did a wonderful job recreating the design. The embroidery is done by hand by a company in England. Slowly, all of the original frontals and matching clerical vestments have been replaced. The last of this second generation of frontals was completed and used for Advent in 2024. The "Boswell Green" frontal is now the old guy of the group.

I suspect that the original set of frontals grew gradually during the early years of St. Mary's. I have memories of tags on them stating which parishioner gave it as a memorial to a loved one, or in thanksgiving for something special in their life. This second generation of vestments have been purchased using monies from the St. Mary's Memorial Fund. We are indebted to all of the people over the years who have given to St. Mary's in memory of a loved one. Their generosity has enabled us to continue to adorn our altar with great beauty as we worship.

MARCH FORMATION: *LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR WITH MERCY*

Jesus' commandment to love neighbors serves as grounding for a congregation's work in its wider neighborhood and community. In fact, having mercy on people we encounter in ordinary life can ground a new way of seeing Christianity and public life. Join us every Sunday, in Lent to be a part of this important conversation.

Love Your Neighbor with Mercy

February 22	The Greatest Commandment: Love Your Neighbor with Ross Kane
March 1	God's Power...God's Weakness with Ruthanna Hooke*
March 8	The Harvest is Plentiful, the Workers are Few with Altragracia Perez-Bullard*
March 15	The Works of Mercy Rev. Lauren Banks and Mark Lagon
March 22	Closing Session Final Questions and Conversation

2026 Lenten Adult Formation Series
St. Mary's Arlington | Paca Hall
*Star denotes recorded video presentation

BEFORE I FORGET: A RESOURCE FOR THOSE STRUGGLING WITH DEMENTIA AND ALZHEIMER'S

Cynthia Phoel's Substack, *Before I forget*, is a collection of brief, heartfelt reflections on accompanying her parents through dementia and Alzheimer's. With honesty, humor, and deep compassion, she writes about what it means to love someone on the journey to forgetting—and what she hopes to remember. Through intimate micro-essays drawn from life in memory care, Cynthia honors the residents and caregivers she has come to know while offering comfort and connection to others walking a similar path.

To read and subscribe, visit [Substack.com](https://substack.com) and search "Cynthia Morrison Phoel." You may also search her name along with "Substack" in your browser to find her page and receive her essays directly in your inbox.

A LITTLE HISTORY FROM THE ARCHIVES

by Gordon Mantler

Little did congregants know in 1956 that the next dozen years would witness such fundamental challenges that many wondered if St. Mary's could even keep the lights on. By 1968, the church had faced two schisms over its leadership and mission, as the country debated whether the values it preached could be made a reality for those marginalized people at home and abroad.

After the Rev. George Tittman's resignation, an abbreviated search led to the vestry's calling of the Rev. John Bartel Reinheimer as the new rector. A



seasoned priest with a fresh education degree, the Rev. Reinheimer was the son of a New York bishop and known for his strong preaching, deep interest in education, and a belief in Christian witness on social issues.

In January 1957, he joined a financially successful church full of young families at the peak of the baby

boom and Cold War and quickly challenged the congregation to embrace a prophetic church of change. Soon after arriving, the Rev. Reinheimer provocatively sermonized on "The Insanity of White Supremacy," a tone that would soon become apparent throughout the church's other communications. The monthly, and then weekly, St. Mary's *Messenger* routinely promoted opportunities to get involved in a changing society, from boycotts of local theaters that refused to desegregate to involvement in the War on Poverty's new Head Start preschool program.

The *Messenger* also captured clearly—perhaps too much so—the voice of the Rev. Reinheimer, whose tone could be strident, even accusatory of

those he thought were too secular. "We do not attract the casual church tramps, nor the social climbers, nor the professional and business status seekers," the rector opined in the *Messenger* in 1962. "Such people are not interested in a church that makes radical demands in terms of worship, education, giving, and action. There are numerous churches which are pious clubs...but thank God, St. Mary's is not one of them."

The rector often modeled his faith in action, joining the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963, routinely participating in ecumenical panel discussions on important political and social issues, and delivering sermons in clear moral terms from the pulpit. But this style and content did risk turning off many congregants in an age of growth and tumult.

St. Mary's remained vibrant in the late 1950s, still bursting at the seams with not enough space for its church school and other activities. In addition to social action work such as hosting Church Women United and League of Women Voters events, the church held the St. Mary's Fair, an annual two-day country style festival for the public, while the St. Mary's Players performed a dramatic production each year, in rotation with the county's other Episcopal churches.

But a generally shared desire to expand the physical plant – this time a parish house and another building for classrooms – clashed with increasing complaints that the rector was too controlling, too "high church," too lacking in pastoral care. A series of real estate transactions on the west side of Glebe Road for new construction set up a clash between the rector's vision and a core group of congregants, including four former senior wardens and ten of the 17 vestrymen (yes, all men), who were concerned with his priorities and personal behavior.

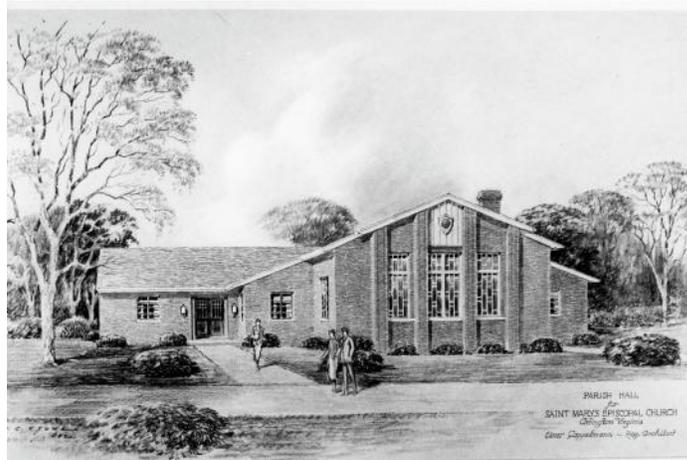
By the end of January 1961, the turmoil came to a head. Early that month, Ed and Elizabeth Campbell, longtime parishioners and prominent activists in Arlington, invited 36 prominent congregants troubled by the church's direction to an informal meeting at their home. "We are much concerned as to whether we can continue to give any effective Christian witness at St. Mary's," they wrote. More than 50 people showed up and enthusiastically chose to start a new church. By the end of the month, the bishop had received a petition signed by 135 parishioners.

In an extraordinary note in the *St. Mary's Messenger*, the rector excoriated those who signed the petition, claiming that many had been "brainwashed by the rumormongers." They were welcome to repent publicly but "until such time, all signers are excluded from the Holy Communion." Few, if any, came back. The new St. Peter's Episcopal met at James Madison Elementary – now the county's Madison Center – for two years until a permanent building was built near Glebe and Chesterbrook roads.

The result was a smaller yet still ambitious St. Mary's. Officially, between 200 and 300 members left, mostly for St. Peter's, although other attrition occurred. Undeterred, a smaller congregation went on to build a parish house and, on the west side of Glebe, an education building in January 1963. The church also continued its country fair, a disproportionately large church school, and interesting ways to spread the good news. The latter included the use of a live donkey during its Good Friday pilgrimage in 1962.

St. Mary's also established a racially integrated secondary school, while county schools slowly desegregated. St. Mary's Episcopal Day School, later called Episcopal Academy, opened its doors in fall 1963, with 20 boys and girls in seventh and eighth grades and was deemed a success, drawing students from as far away as Woodbridge. Four teachers, including the rector, taught a liberal arts education, beginning each day with a worship ser-

vice. By 1968, the school had expanded to include kindergarten through fifth grade and had 107 students, 10 percent of which were Black, according to the headmaster.



In many ways, the school fulfilled the Rev. Reinheimer's vision of Christian education and traditional worship that informed clear social action. But complaints that the rector seemed more interested in being a headmaster than a pastor undermined his larger vision and led to yet another schism a year later, amid an ongoing fight between the vestry and rector over how to balance his duties. As part of the Diocese's 1968 congregational survey, the rector even mentioned in a visitation meeting that St. Mary's could possibly merge with St. Michael's and that the existing church building be converted into a community center.

After years of conflict and a dwindling congregation, the Rev. Reinheimer eventually stepped down as rector in April 1968 to lead Episcopal Academy full-time. As one-time church historian Wallace Andrews notes, one bright note was the election of the first woman to St. Mary's vestry, Doris Murphy. But the rector mostly left behind wreckage: in 1968, St. Mary's had less than 200 members, a nearly 90 percent decline from its height in the late 1950s.

MARCH CALENDAR

WEEKLY SERVICES

SUNDAY

8 am, The Holy Eucharist

8:30-11:30 am, Nursery (3 months-3 years)

9 am, Sunday School & Youth Forum
(PreK-12)

10 am, The Holy Eucharist, with music
Children's Chapel
(Fellowship following | [Livestream](#))

5 pm, The Holy Eucharist

*10:15 am, Praise in the Park
1st & 3rd Sundays in Zachary Taylor Park

TUESDAY

12 pm, Noonday Prayer
7:30 pm, Centering Prayer
(Hybrid in-person and Zoom)

WEDNESDAY

7 am, The Holy Eucharist

THURSDAY

11 am, Healing & The Holy Eucharist

FRIDAY (DURING LENT)

5 pm, Stations of the Cross

WEEKLY EVENTS

MONDAY

7 pm, *The Story* with Mother Meg

WEDNESDAY

12 pm, Lunch and Letters

THURSDAY

6:30 pm, Youth Choir (Choir Room)

7:30 pm, Adult Choir (Choir Room)

DATES OF NOTE

Sun., Mar. 8, 1 pm **Mission Trip Tool Training**

Sat., Mar. 14, 1 pm **Eucharist Preparation Workshop**

Sat., Mar. 21, 9 am **Lenten Clean-Up Day**

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Sun., Mar. 29 **Palm Sunday: 8 am, 10 am, 5 pm**

Thu., Apr. 2 **Maundy Thursday: 7:30 pm**

Fri., Apr. 3 **Good Friday: 12 pm Stations & Holy Hours
5:30 pm Family Service
7:30 pm Tenebrae**

Sat., Apr. 4 **Holy Saturday: 9:30 am Holy Saturday Service
7:30 pm Easter Vigil**

Sun., Apr. 5 **Easter Sunday: 6:30 am Sunrise Service
9 am & 11 am Holy Eucharist w/music**

HOLY WEEK PREPARATION

EASTER FLOWER DONATIONS

If you wish to make a contribution toward this year's Easter flowers in honor or memory of a loved one, Easter Flower envelopes are available in the pews throughout the season of Lent. The last day to submit contributions will be Palm Sunday, March 29th.

EASTER EGG CANDY DONATIONS

We are accepting donations of candy and small stickers for this year's Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 5 at 10 am. Please bring your donations by the office or welcome desk prior to March 15th so that members of our parish can stuff the eggs prior to Easter Sunday!



FLOWERING OF THE CROSS

This year we invite all children to bring flowers—either purchased or from their home gardens—to participate in the tradition of Flowering of the Cross on Easter Sunday during our 9 am family service. The Flowering of the Cross is an Easter tradition where children cover the barren wooden cross with fresh flowers, symbolizing the transition from Jesus' death (Good Friday) to his resurrection (Easter Sunday). Children wanting to participate in this tradition are invited to be a part of the opening procession and should join the clergy in Paca Hall prior to the service.