



the Shield

ST. GEORGE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH • ADVENT/CHRISTMAS/EPIPHANY • WINTER 2017-2018



Receiving • Living • Sharing
THE ABUNDANT LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST

AN EVEN BRIGHTER LIGHT

UNITED IN COMMUNITY

We Bear Christ's Light In The World

ST. GEORGE'S LEADERS

Shine Bright In Our Community

NASHVILLE FELLOWS

From Across The USA

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Letter From The Rector

YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden ... Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. – Matthew 5, from the Sermon on the Mount

Christians understand that we do not get to choose the times of our calling. However, the Bible is abundantly clear about three vital truths for God's people. First, we are indeed called by God (e.g., 1 Timothy 1:9). Second, we are to be discerning of the times (1 Thessalonians 5:1-7). And third, we are to be faithful to our calling regardless of the times and whether or not it is easy (Luke 12:8-11).

For some months, I have been encouraging our parish to renewed and vigorous contemplation of our calling in light of these particular times for our city, our nation, and the larger church. I am more convinced than ever that St. George's can be an even brighter light shining the love of Christ into these broader realms of cultural life. Indeed, I believe St. George's may be in some ways uniquely endowed to offer a blessedly constructive and edifying presence for these times marked by challenge, anxiety, and disunity. This conviction inspires the theme for the current issue of *The Shield*, and I hope you will read the following pages.

As we are all well aware, the metropolitan area of Nashville is flourishing in many ways. Rare is the week that I do not come across an article touting Nashville's dynamic economic growth and cultural popularity as a destination city for increasing numbers of

newly arriving residents. Yet Nashville is also increasingly challenged to address issues ranging from transit limitations to a shortage of affordable housing to weaknesses in our public education system to lingering historic tensions around racial injustice and cultural diversity ... and the list goes on.

Also, it is almost universally acknowledged that in our larger social context we as a country are deeply polarized, not just politically, but also philosophically around foundational assumptions about reality itself. Our times are deeply challenged by increasing social fragmentation, much of it vitriolic in nature and some taking on violent expression.

Furthermore, our times are increasingly characterized by skepticism and indifference of institutional religion. I have almost stopped pointing out annual declines in the membership statistics of mainline denominations like the Episcopal Church lest I seem a doomsayer or a scold. But the facts are the facts, the decline is accelerating, and too many of our church leaders and loyal Episcopalians are either strangely oblivious or captive to inertia or some combination of both.

What would a renewed vision for St. George's look like in times such as these that would at once inspire us in continued fidelity to the gospel and also new expressions of gospel

living for the sake of others? In what ways might we be even more intentional growing our capacity to connect new people to Jesus through our life together and to become an even brighter beacon of Christ's light going forth into the world around us? Our city, our culture, and the larger church yearn for signs of this light. There are relatively few congregations of any kind in the US with the leaders, resources, and energy to embrace the challenge such questions raise and to respond robustly in faith.

When Jesus says "You are the light of the world," he intends this not as a pithy illustration. He means to point to our very reason for being. I want us to hear him with a new sense of urgency, excitement, and imagination.

Know that I look forward to continuing to engage you in the coming weeks and months over this theme, trusting you will bring important wisdom and blessing to our collective discernment. These are critical times, and to paraphrase from the Book of Esther: "If you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for your fellow citizens will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your position for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14).

Leigh +

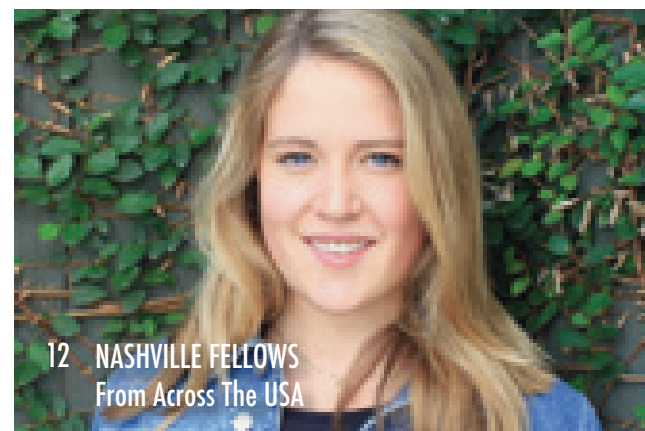
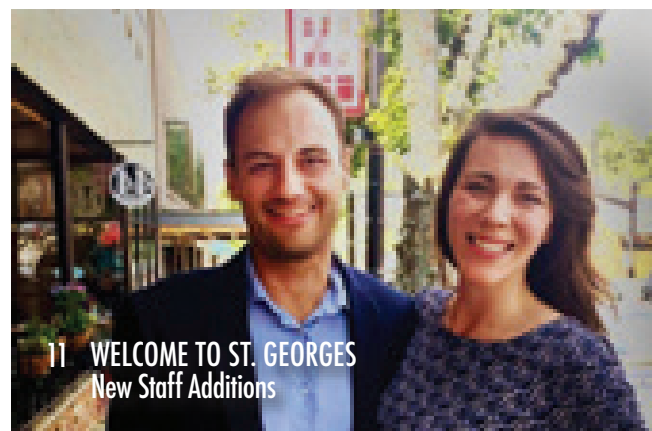



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Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.” – Genesis 12:1-2

AN EVEN BRIGHTER LIGHT By the Rev. R. Leigh Spruill

Recently before going to bed at the conclusion of a long day and after checking my mobile device whereupon I glanced at the latest dispiriting news headlines, I prayed through the office of Compline in the Book of Common Prayer. With so many of you, I regard Compline as one of great treasures of our liturgical tradition. Praying through the familiar liturgy in a somewhat rote fashion, I was suddenly taken up afresh into the power and richness of the Song of Simeon (Luke 2:29-32):

*Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,
according to thy word;
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,
which thou hast prepared before the face of all people,
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles,
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.*

I turned out the light pondering anew what it is to depart each day in peace, knowing the Lord reigns regardless of disconcerting news headlines and the plethora of false rulers in this age. As those who have seen God’s salvation in the face of the Jesus Christ, we might do well – I might do well! – to remember again that this blessing comes to us not simply for our own sake. It is a gift given so that we might shine with this vision before all people. Drifting off, I prayed to wake up mindful that the Song of Simeon is our song as the church, my song as a Christian. Indeed, I want us all to wake up afresh to this calling to be a light.

The origins for the mission of the church are located in that early pages of the scriptural narrative. It begins with

the call of Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 12 to enter into a particular kind of covenant relationship with God in order to help God fulfill a universal purpose: to bless all people. Why is this necessary? You may recall that the immediate context for this call narrative is the human condition of rebellion and alienation symbolized by the Tower of Babel story preceding it (Genesis 11). Abraham is called to begin God’s particular plan of redemption and restoration, of re-gathering all peoples back to himself. I like an old rabbinic midrash that goes like this: “God says, ‘I will make Adam go first, and if he goes astray, I will send Abraham to sort it out.’” The rest of the Old Testament is about Israel’s historical challenges and struggles to remember that its covenantal identity is intertwined with its missional responsibility.

Of course, eventually it is Jesus who has to come to “sort it out.” The original plan of salvation in Genesis 12 becomes an immanent historical reality in Jesus. A timeless truth about Israel’s identity and purpose becomes incarnated in Christ. It is clear from the opening pages of the gospels to the last pages of the New Testament that Jesus Christ is the saving initiative of God to fulfill the purpose of restoring and reconstituting the human race to our original status before God.

However, since Christ’s death, resurrection, and ascension, God’s universal purposes are being worked out through the particular community called the church who is the ongoing Body of Christ in the world for the sake of the world. And we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit to

continue Christ’s work of bringing forth into history the future promises of the Kingdom of God. The Holy Spirit is like the propane that fuels the gas lantern, the electricity powering the lights. Thus, one might say that the mission of God is spread across three epochs: the epoch Israel, the epoch of Jesus, and the epoch of the church. But God’s purpose is continuous: salvation for all people.

What do these preceding “Bible 101” sorts of paragraphs have to do with our current situation as the parish of St. George’s? Everything! I would argue that unless we get it deep into our collective church bones that the biblical story outlined above is in fact our story, we will never become the community of faith God is calling us to be despite already being a growing and vibrant religious body. That is why I preach and teach on this subject so often. We exist for one another and for our world—to be a light, shining with the love of Christ for the sake of God’s universal purposes. It is as simple as that.

And yet we live in incredibly complicated times. Many among us worry about our culture having fallen from some place that used to represent a higher level of social cohesion and shared vision. I suspect there is no returning to where we once were. I believe we must find creative means by which to move forward if we are to flourish as a society and as a church. But as the church, I want us to situate our concerns and anxieties about the brokenness of our culture, as well as our hopes and desires for its mending, within the context of our Christian identity and calling that is, again, to be a light.

Jesus said, “I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.” – John 12:46

Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, “The Lord commanded us, saying ‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’” – Acts 13:47

Jesus said, “Let your light shine before others.” – Matthew 5:16

Some cultural and political observers have pointed out that we are living in times of intensifying claims to personal liberty and increasing demands for the government to be responsible for more of our problems—at the same time! And what has been dropping out of the cultural equation is the presence of vital institutions and communities who occupy the middle ground bridging the gap between extreme individualism and impersonal bureaucracy. Such institutions and communities are schools, neighborhoods, extended families, civic organizations, charities, voluntary associations, and of course, local congregations.

I believe we have hard work to do reclaiming the importance of local communities in any hopeful vision for a renewal and flourishing of our country, for a recovery of a culture of solidarity with our neighbors, for a restoration of the importance of belonging to something larger than self-interest or political allegiance. Sadly, there are few national leaders talking like this. And it is as easy for Christians as it is for politicians to decry our situation and blame others. But as author Yuval Levin writes, “prophesying total meltdown is not the way to draw people’s attention to [our] failure to flourish.”

And this takes me back to our particular calling as the church. I note that the prevalence of light imagery in the Bible to describe the people and mission of God is a visible sign rather than a verbal formulary. As important as it is to share the faith verbally, our age is much more likely to be persuaded visibly than aurally. Our challenge

is to show not just tell. Our calling to bless, to shine as light, is to be the visible presence of God’s redeemed community for the sake of our world around us.

What I am trying hard to get us to understand is that: 1) given the times, our mission as a parish has never been more important; and 2) our mission is less a function of activities and strategies we dream up than it is rooted in our very identity given by God. We belong to a sent and sending Jesus. The form this identity takes looks like a large local Episcopal Church gathering together at the corner of Harding Road and Belle Meade Boulevard each Sunday to remember and celebrate who we are in worship. It also looks like a large local Episcopal Church scattering together from this location to take the light of Christ into our city and all the various other realms of professional, public, and private life, where we might shine with his grace and truth.

What a light St. George’s is for the metropolitan Nashville area. What a blessing we are to the diocese and larger church! How might we become an even brighter light, an ever more creative and dynamic witness that the realities of the gospel are not to be relegated to the margins of life but rather may shine blessings directly into some of our most pressing problems and greatest challenges?

Perhaps ironically, I have found inspiration for these thoughts about our renewed vision as a parish from a Jewish leader, Jonathan Sacks, formerly chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations in Great Britain.

Speaking this past summer at the Chautauqua Institution in New York, Sacks offered the following:

So what do I mean by religion in the public square? I mean simply religion as a consecration of the bonds that connect us, religion as the redemption of our solitude, religion as loyalty and love, religion as altruism and compassion, religion as covenant and commitment, religion that consecrates marriage, that sustains community and helps reweave the torn fabric of society. That kind of religion is content to be a minority. Jews have been a minority wherever we went for 2,000 years. So religion can be a minority, but it can be a huge influence. It doesn’t seek power; it seeks influence. It’s engaged with the world; it’s not retreat from the world. If we can do that, we might just bring those two cars closer together. We might just find that we can have our feet in society and our head in Heaven and we can bring light that will vanquish the darkness. That is the kind of religion the world needs right now.

Amen! ✚



UNITED IN COMMUNITY WE BEAR CHRIST'S LIGHT IN THE WORLD

By Sadie Zoradi

For the past two years I have had the privilege to lead a group of our youth on St. George's annual summer mission trip to Our Little Roses (OLR).


OLR is a home and school for girls who have come from overwhelming situations of abject poverty, abuse, abandonment and oppression in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Today, Our Little Roses Ministries provides the opportunity for a childhood that all girls deserve. Protection from harm. A safe, healthy and loving home. A chance to learn. The dream of a future. And a foundation in faith.

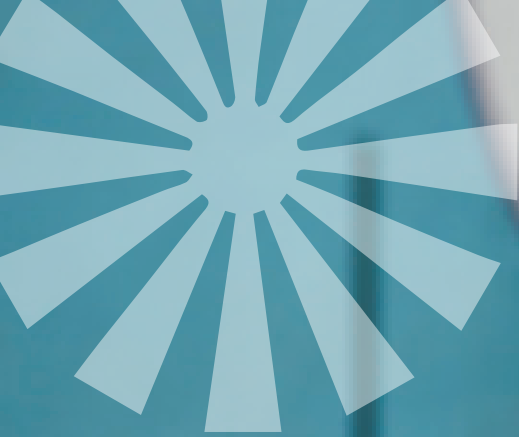
This summer will be St. George's 25th year partnering with OLR. This partnership is unique because it is a short term mission trip built around long-term relationships. I was amazed when I first heard how involved and devoted members of our community were to this home. Many have made this trip two, five, or 20 years. In addition, they continue to invest in the girls' lives and futures during the year through dress drives, shoeboxes, letters, and sponsorships. What is it about this trip that keeps drawing people in?

We share a jam-packed week of service including painting their school, activities, Dragon Camp, endless dancing, soccer games, and much more. It didn't take long in Honduras to realize what draws our youth back each year. It is the deep bonds of love established in true, genuine friendship built over years of consistent presence that transforms the lives of our group and the girls from the home. I watched as the girls' faces lit up being reunited with friends. This past summer our senior girls and a few others had the opportunity to attend the graduation of the senior girls in Honduras. Over the years, even though they live in different worlds, these girls have grown up, shared their high school experiences, and life's joys and sorrows together. It was a beautiful night of celebration as our group was able to represent the family that couldn't be present for many. The girls graduating knew that their friends—sisters in Christ—loved, cared for, believed in, encouraged, and celebrated their achieve-

ments. It is through these honest, intimate relationships built on the love of Christ that we are blessed and can be a blessing to others.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's writes in his book *Life Together*, "Our community with one another consists solely in what Christ has done for both of us." In a world where our youth constantly face pressure to measure up, fit in, and earn their acceptance, Honduras, and the relationships built there, are purely based on the foundation of Christ's love for them. They surpass all distance, time, cultural differences, and language barriers. Christ has united us in community. Every evening our youth assemble to reflect on where they have seen the Lord working in their lives and close the day with Compline, an evening prayer. One evening a new youth remarked that for the first time she understood what it means in Matthew 18 to love God as a child. She reflected that the way she was so openly embraced, warmly trusted, and radically loved by the girls she had met (through no merit of her own), is the way she is called to love God and others. It is in these moments, watching the Holy Spirit work through the power of Christian community, that I see the transformation in the hearts of our youth and stand in awe.

Our challenge is not to let these experiences of transformation end on this trip. Rather, our youth carry this new sense of belonging and community that they've found in Honduras back into their lives. They find ways to serve and continue to respond to God's call to be a brighter light in their own community. This is why at least a third of the youth who attend our trip each summer are not members of St. George's, but hear about the trip through St. George's youth who have attended the trip in the past and who are overflowing with excitement about the relationships God built during their time in Honduras. This image parallels the call of the church—to be so overflowing with the love and transformative power of God and the gospel that we spread his light in our homes, school, workplaces, communities, and to the ends of the earth (Matthew 5:14-16). 



St. George's Youth Share Their Honduras Experiences.

Please read some of our youth's first-hand accounts of what these relationships built in Honduras have meant in their lives:

Sarah Kirkland Over the past two years, I've been able to make friendships with many of the girls, and they're so dear to me. It was amazing to go back this past year; their faces light up with excitement when you walk through the door again and you're able to pick up right where you left off with the relationships you have built. It breaks my heart to leave them, but I've loved writing letters and keeping in touch with them between trips. It's amazing to see how they grow and how they grow in speaking English as well. I have so much love for the girls and hope to continue to go back for many years to come!

Laura Stringfield The relationships that I have made in Honduras are different than any friendships I have in Nashville. They are my family, my sisters. Even though we only see each other once a year, we always reconnect and go right back to where we left off.

Meredith Welborn You go on a trip like this in hopes of changing people's lives for the better, but what you don't realize until it's over is that those people are the ones that changed you — that served you. At church on Sunday, there was a feet washing ceremony for all of the high school graduates — American and Honduran — held by the college students from our team. Having these people literally wash my feet and continually pray over me was overwhelming. God may not always answer your prayers in the way that you want him to or a way that you can see, but when people are praying over you and you feel that love, you know that he is present. After experiencing this all-encompassing feeling of love, I feel that it is my duty to give it back to my new friends at OLR. I hope to have the opportunity to come back year after year to show them that there is someone who is willing

to travel thousands of miles to say hello, someone who is consistently praying over them, someone who is constantly thinking about them, and someone who wants them to succeed just as badly as they want to themselves. I have been so blessed in my life to have a wonderful community of people who are gratified by my victories, and that is something I take for granted. God doesn't give these kind of gifts for you to keep, they're for you to expand and share with others.

Elsa Wilson The friendships that I've formed with the girls of OLR hold a really special place in my heart. Nothing is harder than saying goodbye at the end of the week each summer, yet nothing feels better than being reunited the next June. The girls are some of the sweetest and most fun people that I know, and it's so special knowing that I have a group of great friends waiting for me in San Pedro Sula.





Members of the Poverty in the Arts Missional Community share time and hone their artistic talents.



ST. GEORGE'S LEADERS SHINE BRIGHT IN OUR COMMUNITY

By the Rev. Michael Blaess

In many ways, Discipleship Groups and Missional Communities are a chicken and egg proposition (as in, which comes first?).

Missional Communities are groups of church members committed to growing in Christ together through regular fellowship and intentional engagement with people outside the church. They flow naturally (and deliberately) out of Discipleship Groups.

Discipleship Groups, in turn, are the primary way we identify and equip leaders, especially Missional Community leaders.

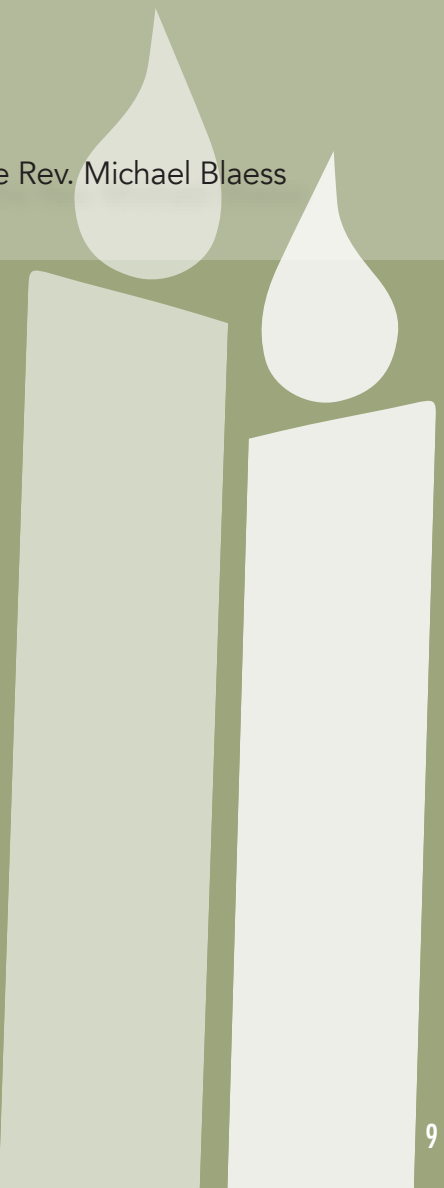
Using a shared framework, each of our Discipleship Groups helps us learn how to more clearly discern what God is up to in our lives and what we're called to do in response. We also recognize that this is not only for our own sake, but also for the sake of blessing others. Our hope is that our leaders will grow ever more confident in discipling those God has called around them. While Discipleship Groups aren't the only way Missional Community leaders may be trained, our hope is

that, ultimately, our Missional Community leaders have been formed in Discipleship Groups in order to be more securely rooted in the vision and the patterns of our life together at St. George's. Indeed, a whole Discipleship Group could even form the core of a Missional Community if they feel led together to a common mission.

Together, Discipleship Groups and Missional Communities are an important part of the greater vision for the people of St. George's to be an even brighter light to the larger community. ✚

To learn more about Discipleship Groups at St. George's, contact the Rev. Dr. Kristine Blaess at 615-385-2150 x 214 or kristine.blaess@stgeorgesnashville.org.

To learn about Missional Communities at St. George's contact Claudia Taylor, Executive Assistant to the Rector, at 615-385-2150 x 218 or claudia.taylor@stgeorgesnashville.org.



ST. GEORGE'S

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land • October 2018



JOIN US.

Susalee and I are excited to announce we are leading another St. George's Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in October 2018. We welcome your interest in this rare opportunity to visit the most holy sites for Christians in the entire world. St. George's has sponsored several other pilgrimages to the Holy Land over the years, and the overwhelming testimony of our pilgrims is that the journey is truly unforgettable. There is no experience quite like walking in the footsteps of our Lord, and one never reads or hears the Bible the same way again.

The dates for this pilgrimage are October 8th – 20th, 2018. Our carefully considered itinerary includes visits to holy sites in Galilee, Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, as well as a visit to Petra in Jordan. It is my hope and expectation that we may have a group of 25-35 parishioners participate. Further information including cost and a full itinerary will be forthcoming shortly. In the meantime, if you are interested in learning more about the pilgrimage, please contact Claudia Taylor at claudia.taylor@stgerogesnashville.org.

Leigh +

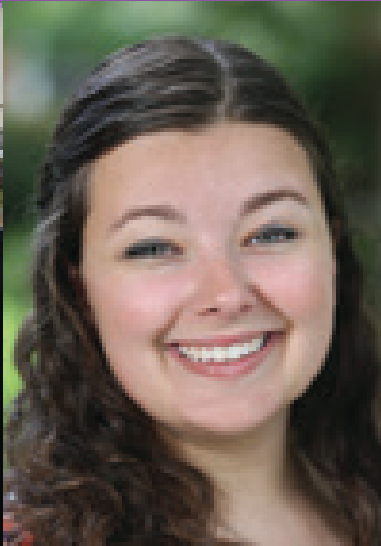
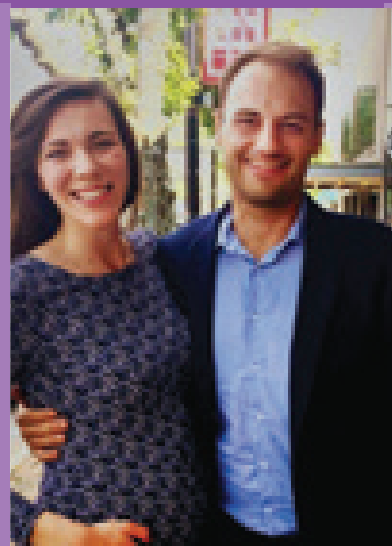
WELCOME TO ST. GEORGE'S

New Staff Additions



JOHN ZAMBENINI

Director of Youth & Campus Ministries



ROSE THOMPSON

Director of St. Dunstan's Choir

After an extensive and thoughtful search, John Zambenini joined our staff as Director of Youth and Campus Ministries on November 6. John is married to Minda, and they welcomed their first child, Andrew, in September.

John received a Master in Divinity from Duke Divinity School in 2015, and for the past three years has served as Youth Minister at All Saints' Church in Durham, North Carolina. He was also Assistant Chaplain to veterans and the elderly at Twin Lakes Community in Burlington, North Carolina. John's prior experiences include work in journalism, politics, and higher education. Originally from Ohio, he called Kentucky home for ten years before moving to North Carolina. John is an avid cyclist, fly fisherman, and reader. He loves seeing youth inhabit the world of the Scriptures and develop a vibrant imagination for the life of discipleship.

Minda is from Lexington, Kentucky. She has been an English teacher for ten years, holds a Master's of English Literature from Middlebury College, and is a lifelong lover of literature. She also enjoys cooking, travel, yoga, and hiking. Minda and John met at Asbury College, fell in love in a music appreciation class, and have been married eight years.

We are thankful for the Zambenini family and are excited to see what God has in store for the future of youth ministries at St. George's under John's leadership.

Join us in welcoming Rose Thompson to our Music Ministry team as our new Director of St. Dunstan's Choir-St. George's choir for children in the first and second grades.

Rose has been teaching in the Nashville and Naperville, Illinois areas for the past eight years. Since 2015, Rose has been the Strings teacher at Harding Academy and has grown the program from just a few after-school lessons to encompass multiple curricular ensembles and an advanced extracurricular ensemble that is frequently invited to perform in the Nashville community.

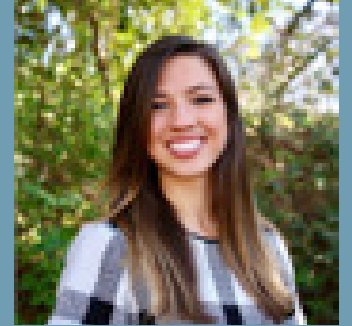
Rose is earning her Master in Music Education from Vanderbilt's Peabody School through the Ma5 Program. Rose is an avid performer and has many musical and academic accolades. She fulfills the role of Alto Section Leader in Vanderbilt's premier choir Chorale, sings with the Nashville Symphony, and cantors for local churches.

In her role with St. Dunstan's, Rose is working to introduce children to basic music theory and to form our young musicians in the Anglican tradition of beautiful choral singing. She is passionate about teaching kids to love music, themselves, and their world.



**Marshall
CLARK**

Memphis, TN
University of Tennessee Knoxville:
English Literature
Hosts: Zee & Brad Pendleton



**Caroline
GARVIN**

Roswell, GA
University of Georgia:
Health Promotion
with an emphasis in Services
Hosts: Jennifer & Aaron Fitzsimmons

NASHVILLE FELLOWS FROM ACROSS THE USA



The Nashville Fellows Program is a nine-month Christian leadership and discipleship program for young adults. We offer recent college graduates a holistic opportunity to enhance their understanding of who they are called to be in Christ and engage with their calling to advance God's kingdom in both their future vocation and every aspect of life.

The Fellows Program runs from late August to May and is hosted by a collaboration of three churches in the Nashville area. Through this unique ecumenical approach, we seek to equip young people to both understand the relevance of Christ in our culture and develop a framework for engaging this culture towards his redemptive and transformative power.



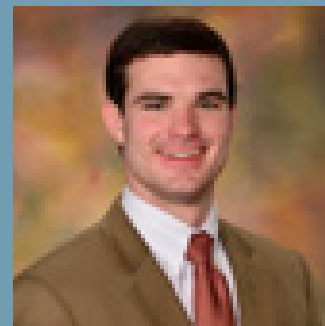
Kelly MCGLYNN

Raleigh, NC
Meredith College:
Family and Consumer Sciences &
Communication
Hosts: Elizabeth & Allen Cox



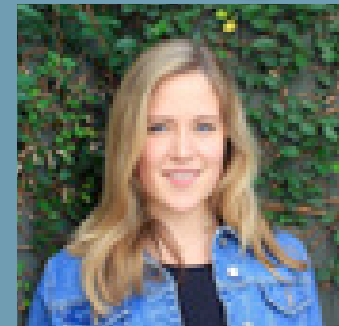
Olivia MCLEAN

Richmond, VA
University of Virginia:
History & Religious Studies
Hosts: Wendy & Jay Longmire



James PATE

Lowndesboro, AL
Auburn University:
Biomedical Sciences
with a concentration of Pre-Med
Hosts: Sarah & Ann Ezell



Elizabeth WILLIAMSON

Houston, TX
University of Texas at Austin:
Kinesiology, Pre-Occupational Therapy
Hosts: Molly & Ed Powell

WHEN YOUR BUCKET OVERFLOWS, POUR IT OUT

BY CAROLINE GARVIN

Recently I was playing with my host family's 20-months old daughter in the yard. The simplest activities are entertaining. There was a baby pool filled with water. Her goal was to take water from the pool and place it into an empty bucket. Using a smaller bucket, she scooped the water out from the pool and filled the larger bucket. When the bucket reached capacity, it spilled over. She continued to fill the full bucket, not realizing that it needed to be dumped out.

As I reflect on the first months of the Fellows Program, my mind comes back to this image.

Filling up, being poured into, overflowing, not pouring out.

As Fellows, we are continually being poured into. There are hundreds of people volunteering their time to show us more of Christ and his Kingdom at work in this world. Our host families offer up their homes for us. Our teachers voluntarily give their time to teach us Scripture and challenge our views, so that we might know more of what we believe. Through our job placement, we receive guidance to become some of the best employees in the workforce. There are mentors, church staff, vocational consultants, friends, and so many more pouring people into our lives because they care.

As I consider my own bucket, I am like a child, not realizing that my bucket is overflowing. I'm allowing it to overflow, but not registering that I'm supposed to be pouring out. It just keeps spilling over the top.

It's easy for me to slip into the mindset that these nine months are all about me. It's easy to want to hold onto my bucket and never pour out what is being poured into me. God though is so gracious in revealing, that while we are being poured into, we are also called to be filling others up.

Selfishly, I want to hold onto all that I have received, but the Lord is nudging me, saying to me, "pour out your water so that you can receive more." I think I want to hold onto this gift because I'm scared of where it might go, but then I remember it goes into the world. It goes back to our host families, our mentors, our co-workers, our new friends, our church. We are able to give a small part of what we are receiving. We aren't here to be solely poured into. We are here to pour out. To share more of our experiences with those around us. To share Christ and the amazing work he is doing in each of our lives. To share even our brokenness.

I come back to what Jesus did for us. He he poured out his life for us. so that we could spend eternity with him.



Sarah & Jackson Wray with their children.

SARAH AND JACKSON WRAY

Q. Tell us a bit about yourselves and your family? What drew you to St. George's?

A. Jackson grew up in Nashville and attended Christ Church Cathedral as a child. I grew up in Cincinnati and met Jackson during my undergraduate years at Vanderbilt. We were married in 2003. We have two children, Emma Grace who is 9 years old and Harrison who is 6 years old. When Emma Grace was 1, she started in the Mother's Day Out program at St. George's Kindergarten. Jackson and I immediately fell in love with both St. George's Kindergarten and also with St. George's Church. We were drawn to the community and to the vision and vibrancy of the church, and we felt welcomed immediately! The continuity of having children attend preschool at the same place that our family attended church was a tremendous blessing! Our love for St. George's Church and the community continues as we enjoy all of the traditions, the inspirational and thought-provoking sermons, the multitude of educational opportunities and occasions for personal growth, the numerous outreach opportunities, and the vibrant community.

Q. Last year you were a part of a group that formed a Missional Community (MC) reaching out to others through the Alpha course. What led you to be a part of this group?

A. We were drawn to the group for many reasons. We really liked the idea of being a part of an intimate church group with a heart for outreach. We wanted to become more involved in the community of St. George's and also the broader Nashville community. Alpha was the perfect opportunity to become more connected as a family. Also, Sarah took the Alpha course in London over 20 years ago, which was an incredible experience! Being a part of Alpha at St. George's has been incredibly fulfilling and transformative.

Q. This issue of *The Shield* magazine focuses on our collective desire for St. George's to be an even brighter light to our local community as well as to the world at large. Can you describe how being a part of an MC fulfills this mission for you personally?

A. Being a part of a Missional Community has enabled us to intentionally and authentically reach out to

Nashville's larger community through organized family-centered fellowship gatherings. We have also had the opportunity to spread God's love both through organized fellowship meetings and groups and also through spontaneous encounters when needs were discovered within the group. Our children have felt a part of the group from the beginning and routinely ask, "when is the next Alpha meeting?!"

Q. Have you had any unexpected experiences or do you feel changed in any way by your experiences with your MC?

A. Being a part of the Alpha Missional Community strengthened our family connections as we reached out to others. Our marriage is stronger as a result of the Alpha experience and our children were also blessed by engaging in community with the other children in the group. In a very amazing way, the experience of outreach as a family became a tremendous blessing for us as it also drew us closer into community with others.

Q. For those unfamiliar with Alpha, can you describe what the course is about and what makes it unique?

A. Alpha is unique because it originated in London at an Anglican parish led by Nicky Gumbel. It was designed to be a series of weekly gatherings revolving around a very nice meal. The meal is an integral part of the Alpha gatherings, as sharing a seated meal provides an opportunity for informal discussion and is a wonderful way to really get to know one another. Sarah still remembers her first Alpha meal in London over 20 years ago...it was an amazingly delicious and gorgeously presented Indian feast! She will always remember the Alpha presentation, the meal, and the conversation that evening. Each Alpha meeting is multifaceted as there is time for stimulating conversation and laughter revolving around a delicious seated dinner, an engaging faith-based presentation, small group discussion, and a time for prayer at each gathering. What a wonderful way to discover and share God's love!

Q. What do you and your family like to do when you aren't busy at St. George's?

A. We enjoy traveling, exploring the outdoors together, fishing, cooking, laughing, and reading together. Emma Grace stays busy with gymnastics. Harrison plays soccer and also likes competitive swimming. †



NEWS & NOTES

from St. George's

- ① With the recent rash of natural disasters the generosity of St. George's has been felt in both Texas and Florida. Through parishioner donations St. George's was able to send St. Mark's Episcopal \$12,058 for Hurricane Harvey relief efforts. Additionally, St. George's sent the Episcopal Diocese of Florida \$5,788 for Hurricane Irma relief efforts. Thank you for your prayers and eagerness to help.
- ② September 24 was a sight to behold at St. George's as our own Director of Music Ministries, Woosug Kang and our Associate Director of Music Ministries, Gerry Senechal faced off in "Dueling Organists." This not-to-be-missed event raised money for the Chorister's upcoming trip to Ely Cathedral in 2019. It was an impressive display of talent and fun by our very talented music leaders.
- ③ St. George's Stewardship kick-off was a big success in the form of this year's annual Harvest Dinner. Over 300 people came to celebrate the bountiful blessings of life at St. George's. Co-Chairs Elizabeth Cox, Taylor Maloney, and Ansley Wells did a spectacular job and the evening was fun and memorable. A special thanks once again to Edley's BBQ who provided the tasty entrée.
- ④ St. George's Farmers Market closed out a successful growing season on October 26 with a great celebration for vendors and patrons featuring food and live music. Look for information in the spring about the 2018 Farmers Market!
- ⑤ During our Dignity Donation drive in September St. George's collected over 600 pieces of clothing and personal care items for the women experiencing Christ centered care for addiction, mental illness, trauma and/or incarceration at The Next Door. Thank you to all who participated—your compassion was felt by the women benefitting from this important ministry.
- ⑥ St. George's has welcomed a variety of lively and engaging speakers during the 10:05am Sunday school hour during this fall's Rector's Forum: "A Light for the City." Speakers have included our very own Dr. Woosug Kang, Dr. Morgan Wills of Siloam, Mayor Megan Barry, Craig Stewart of the Warehouse in Capetown, South Africa, and Dr. Randolph Lowry of Lipscomb University. Feel free to stop in and join the conversation!



A NOTE FROM CATHERINE BEEMER

Our Director of Parish Giving on Stewardship

Growing up as an Episcopalian, it may come as no surprise to learn that we did not talk about money in our small parish. To be sure, there was an annual stewardship appeal, but not much more. It seems things haven't really changed. There is reluctance to discuss stewardship in general, let alone to talk about our own personal commitments.

Though I may not have heard messages about church finances, I did see the weekly passing of the offering plate and my parents dropping in their offering envelope. This is a good visual, especially for children in the pews. But we need to do more. That is why St. George's leadership is committed to turning stewardship into a year-round conversation. This conversation will come in the form of more transparency about our pledges – answering questions like, “how many new pledges did we receive?” or, “which age groups are making pledges (or not)?” You may begin to hear more about stewardship in sermons, during Sunday school, and at Bible studies or other activities at St. George's.

Further, we want to encourage you to talk about your stewardship with someone – your spouse, a friend, a clergy member – especially if you are contemplating giving for the first time. You never know what kind of influence you may have over a peer, colleague, or even a family

member who has not yet determined how best to demonstrate their own gratitude.

Part of our participation in this community of Christ is giving. We are most grateful to those of you who already have turned in your pledge cards with your commitment to this community for next year. Thank you. We celebrate your pledge and the blessings that will follow.

Our goal this year is to have 750 families and individuals making a pledge to St. George's. With your pledge, you allow us to do more specific planning for the year ahead. Both for the outreach that impacts our community, and perhaps more importantly, for the inreach that we all experience as members of this parish.

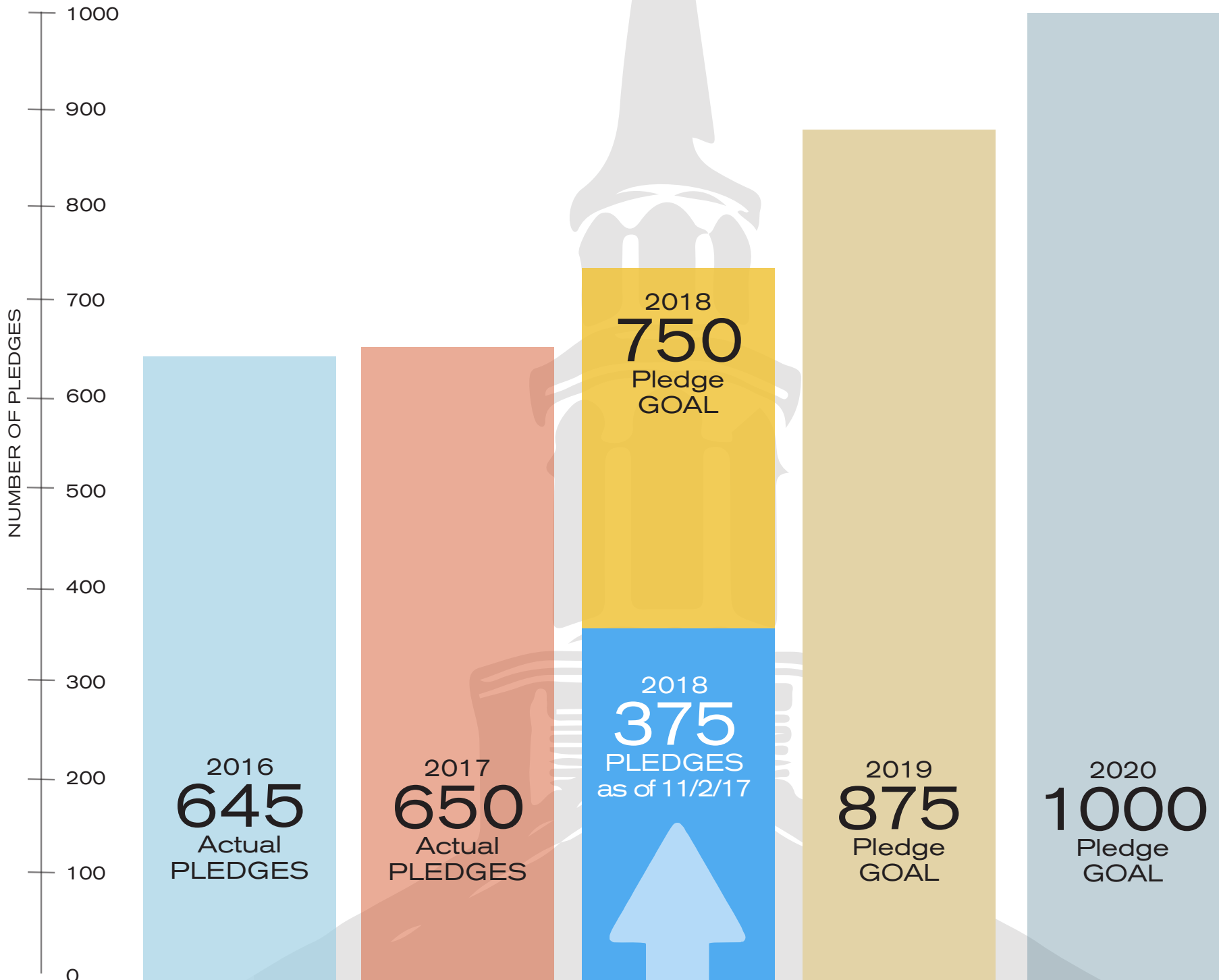
If you have not yet done so, please prayerfully consider your own pledge to St. George's for the coming year.

Yours in Christ,

Catherine S. Beemer

CHARTING OUR COURSE

UPDATE AS OF NOVEMBER 2, 2017





GIVING AS AN EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE

By Christine Cronk

Growing up, my mother was a homemaker and took care of me and my three sisters, while my dad worked very hard to provide for us all on a modest income. There was no room in the family budget for dance or music lessons, and even dining out at fast food establishments were rare occurrences. Yet every Saturday evening like clockwork my dad sat down thoughtfully at the kitchen table, wrote a check, stuffed it into a little white envelope, and laid it on the counter with his keys and wallet. On Sunday morning he placed the little white envelope into his dress shirt pocket and off to church we went. During mass my dad handed the envelope to whichever of us happened to be sitting next to him to place into the collection basket. I don't know how much those checks were for, but in those days I know it was not given out of our family's surplus.

God is so very generous and has blessed me in so many ways and with so many gifts for which I am extremely thankful. I know God wants me to be like him, so I strive to be generous too, but it is not always easy. Even though we are called to give of our time, talent, and treasure, there were times when I held on tightly to my financial resources. As I grew in faith and trust and believed in God's promise to always provide for me, and as I continue to do so, he has shown me over and over again the magnitude of his love for me and has certainly kept his promise to provide and more.

Each year as I prayerfully contemplate my annual pledge, I recall my dad's unfailing commitment to give back to God some of what God provided to him. I am still striving to be more generous and there is always room for improvement, but giving back a portion of the treasure God has entrusted to me has not only become easier, but is now an integral part of my expression of gratitude and love for God. I encourage those who have not yet incorporated a habit of consistently giving of the treasure God has entrusted to you in your life to take that first step and realize the blessings that will surely come as a result. ✝

Christine Cronk and her daughter Chelsea.

SO MANY WAYS TO GIVE • Stewardship 2018



THE CITY

Under the Giving tab you can quickly make a one-time donation or set up recurring donations on any day of the month you choose. The City walks you through each step and saves your information securely.



MOBILE

Text "George" to 73256 from your mobile phone or device. A link will be texted back to you to make your gift with a credit or debit card through a secure site.



ONLINE

Visit stgeorgesnashville.org and follow the "Give Online" link to be directed to an online giving form where you can make a donation.



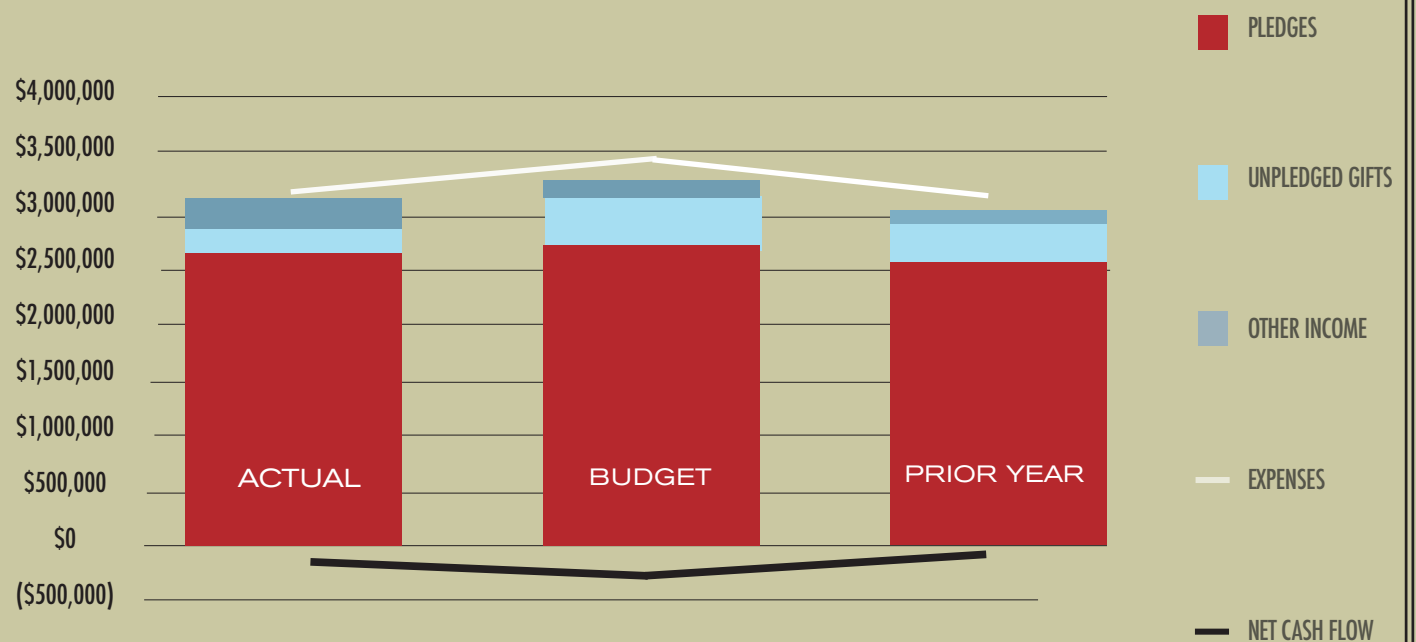
BY MAIL

Checks can be mailed to:
 St. George's Episcopal Church
 4715 Harding Pike
 Nashville, TN 37205
 Please make checks out to:
 St. George's Episcopal Church

ST GEORGE'S FINANCIALS



TREASURER'S REPORT OCTOBER 2017 Year to Date





St. George's parishioners celebrate the kick-off to our Stewardship season at the Harvest Dinner in October.

SPECIAL SERVICES

SILENT NIGHT: A Public Service of Remembrance and Healing Sunday, December 17 | 6:00pm St. George's Church, Nave

Have you experienced the loss of a loved one, a relationship, a job, or do you have other grief weighing heavily? We know that Advent is a time for looking forward to new beginnings. But it is not only a time for looking forward. It is also a time for remembering and for honoring the grief we bear, that God might touch us with his healing as we look forward to his coming in glory. "Silent Night" is a beautiful, traditional service of evening prayer and will include favorite hymns, music by St. George's Choir, candle-lighting, and an opportunity to receive healing prayer and anointing. All are invited to come rest in God's presence.

Christmas Eve Sunday, December 24 Advent IV

7:30am Holy Eucharist
8:45am Holy Eucharist
9:00am Holy Eucharist
Christmas Services
3:00pm Holy Eucharist
with Children's Sermon
5:30pm Holy Eucharist
10:30pm Choral Prelude
11:00pm Holy Eucharist

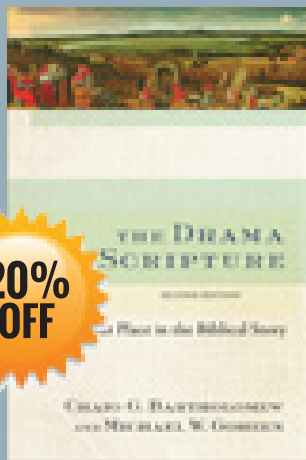
Christmas Day Monday, December 25 10:00am Holy Eucharist

Ash Wednesday Wednesday, February 14 Holy Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes

7:00am
12:00pm
6:00pm



BOOK NOOK



THE DRAMA OF SCRIPTURE

Finding Our Place
In the Biblical Story

Craig Bartholomew
and Michael Goheen

One of the great opportunities our Nashville Fellows enjoy is the chance to engage many texts of theological and cultural importance, both to resource their vocations in the marketplace, and their growth as disciples of Jesus Christ. *The Drama of Scripture* by Craig Bartholomew and Michael Goheen grounds them in the basic plotline of Scripture, informs them about the distinctive themes of the Bible, and transforms their understanding for how their story fits into God's story. For these reasons, I would also highly recommend it to all our parishioners as a resource for understanding Holy Scripture.

— The Rev. Clint Wilson

INREACH

Inreach, a lay ministry of parishioners helping other parishioners, began in 1996. Shepherds of the Month coordinate volunteers who serve as members of the body of Christ to assist with rides, tasks, running errands, or a few meals. Inreach reaches in to help smooth out temporary rough spots.

Being a Christian parish family means reaching out to others. If you can spare an hour or two a month, would you like to join our list of volunteers or to serve as one of our Shepherds?

For assistance, call the church office at 615-385-2150 or pick up the Inreach Shepherds bookmark in the church office.

Want to be on our list of volunteers?

Please contact Jeanne Gore at
615-371-9078

or jengalan@comcast.net.



Upcoming SHEPHERDS OF THE MONTH

DECEMBER
Emily Walker 865-789-5798

JANUARY
Gail Molen 772-696-2267

FEBRUARY
Cathy Shell 615-414-0669

TRANSITIONS

BIRTHS

Colton Lawrence Costanza,
son of Sutton and Pete Costanza

Thaxton Rivers Wilson,
son of Tammy and Rob Wilson

BAPTISMS

Avery Dyer Bean,
daughter of Lauren and Alan Bean

Eleanor Louise Bracken,
daughter of Colleen and Michael Bracken

Dorothy Dillard Burns,
daughter of Kate and Will Burns

Edward Lawrence Gillmor,
son of Stephanie and Matthew Gillmor

Robert Drew Harpool,
son of Victoria and Drew Harpool

Wyatt Roe Mattice,
son of Rory and Kevin Mattice

Fitz McCrae Ozburn,
son of Hannah and Marc Ozburn

DEATHS

William Jennings Bryan, Jr.
Danny William Terry

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Diane Baldwin

Leslie Ballard

Emily Brazzel

Laura and John Chadwick

Carol Dashiff

Grace Frederick

Ashley Knierim

Debbie Mathews

Cynthia and David Moroney

Lauren Pendleton

Will Pendleton

Garland Rose

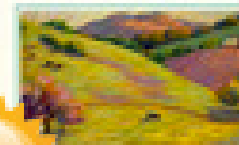
Aaron, Hilary, Wyatt, William,
Lucie, and Charlie Stimart

Michael Thompson

BOOK NOOK

RECTORS
BOOK
RECOMMENDATION

PRAYING WITH THE PSALMS



A Year of Daily Prayers and
Reflections on the Words of David

EUGENE H. PETERSON

PRAYING WITH THE PSALMS:
A Year of Daily Prayers and Reflections
on the Words of David

Eugene H. Peterson

For those wanting to start off the New Year well with renewed disciplines of daily Scripture reading (and who among us doesn't?), I recommend this volume from one of my very favorite Christian writers, Eugene Peterson. Beginning with Psalm 1 on January 1, the book is organized around a short daily reading from a psalm followed by a very brief meditation and prayer. By day 365 the reader has read through the entirety of the Psalter, an easy but highly rewarding spiritual exercise for your calendar year 2018. Born of years in pastoral ministry and deep contemplation of the Christian life, Peterson's *Praying with the Psalms* is a small gem I can commend to all. I used it in my own daily morning devotions in 2017.

— The Rev. R. Leigh Spruill

ST GEORGE'S

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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NASHVILLE, TN 37205

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Winter worship schedule

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

7:30am Holy Eucharist
8:45am Holy Eucharist
with Children's Chapel*+
9:00am The Table+
10:05am Sunday School*
11:15am Holy Eucharist*+
5:00pm Evening Prayer
with Holy Eucharist

SPECIAL SERVICES

Christmas Eve, December 24

Advent IV

7:30am Holy Eucharist
8:45am Holy Eucharist
9:00am Holy Eucharist
Christmas Services
3:00pm Holy Eucharist
with Children's Sermon
5:30pm Holy Eucharist
10:30pm Choral Prelude
11:00pm Holy Eucharist

Christmas Day, December 25

10:00am Holy Eucharist

Ash Wednesday, February 14

Holy Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes
7:00am
12:00pm
6:00pm

+Live Video Feed of this service at stgeorgesnashville.org

*Nursery and childcare for ages 6 weeks through 5 years will open 30 minutes prior to each service.



The Shield is a quarterly publication of St. George's Episcopal Church and is distributed to members and friends to engage and inform readers about what is happening in the life of our church community.

Communications Team

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Joe King, Director of Lay Member Engagement
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Hunter Hodge

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On the cover:

Girls at Our Little Roses in Honduras.
Special thanks to Tanzy Wallace for use of her images.

