

# THE FAITHFUL BELL



## STAFF

The Rev. Conor Alexander, *Rector*  
Tina Lassiter, *Administrative Assistant*  
Bennett Card, *Christian Formation*  
John Ickes, *Music Director*  
Roland Nave, *Accompanist*  
Brett Iwejor, *Nursery Attendant*

## Vestry

Susan Moore, *Senior Warden*  
Ron Simmons, *Junior Warden (1)*  
Ed Silva, *Junior Warden (2)*  
Lynn Kennedy, *Registrar*  
Roxanne Taylor, *Treasurer*  
Dosh Jackson, *Finance*  
Ken Clarke, *Stewardship*  
Karen Palmerone, *Social*  
Robert Savage, *Communications*  
Susan Moore, *Christian Formation*  
Flavel Blyden, *Outreach*  
Susan Golden, *Evangelism*

## Parish Ministry Leaders

Jackie Clarke, *Acolytes*  
Tsu Fullwood, *Altar Guild*  
Maureen Fuster, *ECW*  
Erika Grasse, *EYC*  
Bob Fullwood, *Men's Group*  
Ken Clarke, *Ushers*

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Dear Friends in Christ,

As I sit down to write this, we have completed two weeks into our study of Romans, i.e., What Does the Bible Say About Gays and Lesbians? As you can imagine, there are people in the group with a variety of opinions on the subject. Some feel that it is a sin and that's that. Others feel that the topic is more nuanced, or that it speaks to a past era. The one thing that I am very happy about is that no matter where each of us comes from, we are able to sit down in fellowship and discuss the matter. I've seen too many churches torn apart over this issue, so when the Vestry brought up the subject, I insisted that we were not going to let it be a dividing issue. We're going into this as a family, and we're coming out of it as a family. All that being said, I want to share a bit of what we have discovered.

First off, the reason why I chose Romans as our topic for discussion: Several years ago, while I was still in seminary, former Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey visited us and delivered a talk on the subject of gay people in the Church. He acknowledged many of the items in the Old Testament that we don't consider binding today, so it was conceivable to place the Levitical prohibitions in that category. But then, he argued, you come to the New Testament and can't get past Romans 1. Of course, I'm never one to back down from a challenge so let's get into it.

The verses in question are 1:26-27, where St. Paul describes women exchanging natural relations with men and burning with lust for one another. The same was said regarding men being consumed with lust for other men. As we studied and struggled with this text, one thing became abundantly clear. This passage was describing a misuse of human sexuality. Nowhere was mention made of love, commitment, bonding, or affection. It was always described as an all-consuming lust. In this passage that lust was described in a homosexual context, but from my observations in today's day and age the problem is incredibly prevalent in heterosexual contexts. Replacing love with lust is a universal human struggle that we need the grace of God to overcome.

The question then becomes "What happens with gay and lesbian people who come to faith?" In a few weeks we will be looking at Romans chapter 8, which starts off by saying that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. What should the Church's response be to people who are genuinely in love, and facing the same problems of lust described earlier? These are still open questions that we need to struggle with. Please join us for our discussions at 9:15 on Sundays and together we can discern where God is leading St. Francis on this topic.

# Senior Warden

## What are you thankful for?

Before or after grace has been said at your Thanksgiving table, do you go around the table and each person says what they are thankful for? A lot of families do. It goes something like this:

- “I’m thankful for my family and my children.”
- “I’m thankful for our home.”
- “I’m grateful to be alive.”
- “Thanks for the food.”
- A child might say, “I’m thankful for my video games —and for hitting the home run.”
- “I’m thankful to have a job.”

I’m not knocking this tradition, but can we add to it? Often, what is missing at Thanksgiving is not an attitude of gratitude, but rather a *Godward* gratitude. Consider this:

- Who arranged events, life circumstances or fate in order for you to have your loving family or your children? Who keeps your family together? Certainly not fate.
- Who is responsible for allowing you to have a roof over your head?
- Who gives you your next breath? Or allows you to wake up every morning?
- Who created food, and allowed you to eat today?
- Who makes it possible for you to have the video games? Or to hit that homerun?
- Who allowed you to have your job?

Of course, the correct response to these questions is God. He is the source, substance, and end of everything that we are, do, have, and enjoy. He is the object of all our thanksgiving. By all means, be grateful this Thanksgiving. And in your full-stomach feeling of gratitude, think about the One who should receive all the thanksgiving.

This Thanksgiving, don’t merely be more thankful just change the focus to thankfulness to God - Godward gratitude. Realize that true thankfulness is praise to God.

Thank God through Jesus. “Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Colossians 3:17).



“Thank God always and for everything” (Ephesians 5:20). When we say “God’s been good to us,” we usually mean that God has given us nice things. What about the not-so-nice things in life? Thank God.

What about the hard times? Thank God.

When Thanksgiving comes and goes, and when you’re back at work, or back in the humdrum routine of everyday life... thank God. Cultivate the greater Godward gratitude that can transform every common event into an act of worship.

Jeff and I will be traveling to Pennsylvania to enjoy Thanksgiving with my daughter and grandson. This is tradition for us and, although I miss celebrating the first Sunday of Advent with all of you, I treasure and am thankful to God for the opportunity to spend time with my family.

Please enjoy this blessing for Thanksgiving dinner at your home.

***We Give Thanks*** by Harry Jewell

*Our Father in Heaven, we give you thanks for the pleasure of gathering together for this occasion. We give you thanks for this food prepared by loving hands. We give you thanks for life, the freedom to enjoy it all and all other blessings. As we partake of this food, we pray for health and strength to carry on and try to live, as you would have us. This we ask in the name of Christ, Our Heavenly Father. Amen.*

Thanking God for all of you,

*Susan Moore*

Susan Moore, *Senior Warden*

***FYI:***

- *The first Sunday in Advent is November 29. It’s hard to believe that Christmas is less than 2 months away.*
- *Ministry Focus for November: Sunday Morning Ministries—Ushers & Acolytes, Altar Guild, Counters, Coffee Hour, and Music.*

# ***Christian Formation***

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Dear Parish Family:

As the last Sundays of Pentecost wind down, we approach a new liturgical year and the season of Advent! Advent dates back to the 4<sup>th</sup> Century and its liturgical color is blue, a color of joy and celebration! So why do we need Advent?

- First and foremost, we need the season of Advent as a time of personal spiritual discipline. The Advent scripture readings, hymns and spiritual messages give each of us an alternative to the commercialized madness of the approaching Christmas season
- We need Advent because it is a season of waiting and watching for something, the coming of the Messiah—past, present and future. It helps to keep December from becoming a commercialized blur and enables us to come to Christmas spiritually refreshed.
- We need Advent because of its emphasis on darkness and light. Advent falls in the darkest time of the year and our Church fathers planned it that way, as they looked at not only replacing pagan festivals celebrating the winter solstice but also a celebration of the birth of the light of the world, Jesus Christ!
- And last, we need Advent because it is a season of Hope. The first candle lit on the advent wreath is the candle of hope. Hope is the predominant theme for the season and each of us is called to reach out to others with compassion, love and understanding in the hope that it will take root and flourish and grow throughout the world.

So come to Church to fully experience the season of Advent, visit one of our Sunday School classes, and share in the special lessons and activities geared to each of us as we watch and wait together!

Faithfully yours:  
Bennett



## **LEM SCHEDULE**

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### **November 1**

8:00 am - Susan Golden  
10:30 am - John Ickes  
(Prayers)  
Carol McCarthy  
(Readings)



### **November 8**

8:00 am - Cheryl Blyden  
10:30 am - Twila Leavitt  
(Prayers)  
Terrence Cumberland  
(Readings)

### **November 15**

8:00am - Cheryl Blyden  
10:30 am - Barbara Taylor  
(Prayers)  
Clay Wise  
(Readings)

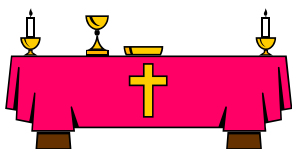


### **November 22**

8:00 am - Susan Golden  
10:30 am - Carol McCarthy  
(Prayers)  
John Ickes  
(Readings)

### **November 29**

8:00 am - Bennett Card  
10:30 am - Lynn Kennedy  
(Prayer)  
Barbara Taylor  
(Readings)



## **ACOLYTES**

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### **November 1**

- Spencer- Crucifer
- Selena- Gospel Bearer
- Anna- Torch Bearer
- Isabella- Torch Bearer

### **November 8**

- Andre- Crucifer
- Emerson- Gospel Bearer
- Caerdwean- Torch Bearer
- Devon- Torch Bearer

### **November 15**

- Emerson- Crucifer
- Spencer- Gospel Bearer
- Brady- Torch Bearer
- Anna- Torch Bearer

### **November 22**

- Spencer- Crucifer
- Andre- Gospel Bearer
- Caerdwean- Torch Bearer
- Selena- Torch Bearer

### **November 29**

- Brady- Crucifer
- Rylan- Gospel Bearer
- Isabella- Torch Bearer
- Emerson- Torch Bearer

### **Altar Guild**

**October 24 - November 6**

Sara Grinnell

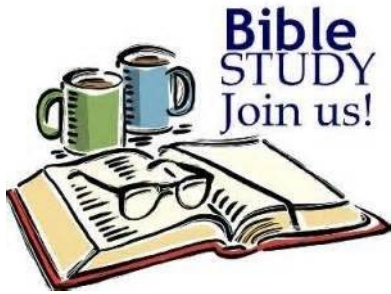
**November 7 - November 20**

Ed McCarthy

**November 21 - December 4**

Roxanne Taylor

# Footsteps in Faith



Please join us on Tuesdays at 7 pm! We're studying the Gospel according to Luke.

## ***Outreach: Parish Food Closet***

Yes, we still operate our food closet. We are maintained by referrals from Virginia Beach Social Services every five weeks, Monday through Thursday.

We are in need of food supplies:

Canned meats	Canned fruits	Pancake mix (complete)
Boxed potatoes	Peanut butter	Soups
Pasta	Jelly	Rice
Spaghetti sauce	Cereal	Canned vegetables
Dry beans	Dry milk (small pkgs)	
Boxed cornbread mix	Boxed muffin mix	
Boxed biscuit mix		

We do not have facilities for anything but non-perishable items.

**\*\*Bring items with you to church and place in the basket in the rear of the Nave.**

Thank you in advance, Doris Naugle & Elinor Ruth



## ***Food Pantry News***

Thanks to the generosity of your donations, we were able to feed 66 people (36 adults, 30 children) in the month of October! Please continue to donate so we can continue to help feed our community.



## November Events

### *Holiday Mail for Heroes*

**November 8, 7 pm**

*Card signing and entertainment*

Each year, selected chapters of the American Red Cross (ARC) host a program entitled “Holiday Mail for Heroes.” Well-wishers sign holiday greeting cards and return them to the ARC, which in turn distributes them to deployed American service members.

We’re kicking off the evening with an appearance by Jennifer Gammill, a hugely talented vocalist/instrumentalist.

This is wide open to the public, and there is no charge involved.

Interested folks may bring their own cards or sign the ones we provide.

If they choose to bring cards, we’ll give them a chance on a drawing for door prizes (hint: there is a terrific shop at Town Center named The Royal Chocolate). Refreshments will be served. We meet, we greet, we eat! For more information, see John Ickes.



### **CWU**

2015 World Community Day

Friday, November 6

11 am followed by lunch

St. Nicholas Catholic Church  
712 Little Neck Rd., Virginia Beach  
*Everyone Welcome (including men)*

### **UTO**



November 1 is the official ingathering day for United Thank Offering blue boxes and envelopes. If you have not yet turned in your donations, please bring them Sunday, November 8, and place them in the offering plate.



### **ECW**

The next Episcopal Church Women’s Meeting will be on Saturday, November 14, at 10 am in the Crigger Room. We will follow with a knitting and craft workshop, so bring your projects! Refreshments will be served.

Attention all military, active and retired! Please submit a photo of yourself in uniform for our new directory's military page! Just bring your photo in to church, and put it in the marked folder on the table in the Commons.

There is a list of all parishioners' names and addresses on a clipboard on the table in the Commons. Please be sure to verify that your name and address will appear correctly in the new directory, as we continue to work on putting it all together. Thank you!



### Mark your calendar!

*St. Francis's is hosting  
this year's*

## Peace & Pie

**Sunday evening,  
November 22, at 6 pm**

### *Christmas Pageant Rehearsals*

Starting on November 29,  
Christmas pageant rehearsals will  
take place during Sunday School,  
and will continue through Advent.



***Check out the Ministry Focus  
for the month of November  
in the bulletin every Sunday.***

# ***Vestry Meeting Summary of Action***

**Vestry Meeting—October 21, 2015**

## **Summary of Action**

### **Update—Fr. Conor:**

The Fire Marshall came to do an inspection last month. Exit sign bulbs have now been replaced, control panels labeled, and fire extinguishers inspected. The fire alarm system had not been inspected recently; since professional testing is a legal requirement, the Vestry voted to use money from the maintenance fund for a yearly contract to get everything checked once a year (smoke detectors, heat detectors, panels, pull station, etc.).

When the Disciples Making Disciples Strategic Plan was presented to the parish, one of the discussion groups suggested “adopting” nearby Green Run High School by supporting its teams, buying ads in the yearbook, etc. The Vestry concurred that this is a good idea. Fr. Conor contacted the leader of the Young Life Christian group there. Susan Golden (Evangelism) and Flavel Blyden (Outreach) will look into this further.

**New Vestry Members—**The Vestry welcomed newly elected members Twila Leavitt and Kevin Kennedy. They will begin now to participate in Vestry meetings, but will have no vote or assigned ministry until they take office in January for their three-year terms.

**Finance Report—**Dosh Jackson: Due to increased Pledge donations and lower expenses in September, the deficit is down to \$1,941, Dosh is happy to report. Christian Formation expenses are now being paid from donations restricted for that purpose. The total from the 20-40-60 Campaign is \$3,027. Dosh is getting ready to prepare the budget proposal for 2016, with assistance from other Vestry members.

**HVAC System in Nave—**Ed Silva: The heat is not working, so the system needs to be replaced before cold weather begins. We applied for and received a grant from the Diocese to cover part of the cost, and some parishioners have made donations designated for this purpose. Ed has arranged for a new compressor at a lower cost than expected. In addition, a Carrier technician will be checking the HVAC units in individual rooms, including the nursery, which are not working properly.

## **Ministry Area Reports**

**Senior Warden—**Susan Moore: “Ministry Focus” is a new article in the Parish Notes each Sunday, describing and highlighting all that we have going for us at St. Francis.

The second annual Trunk or Treat outreach will be held on Saturday, October 31, 5:30 – 7 pm. The plan is to illuminate the parking lot in order to attract attention. All are invited to participate—in costume or not.

**Social—**Karen Palmerone: The directory will have a page of photos of active and retired military members and an activity page.

**Evangelism—**Susan Golden: Peace and Pie will be held November 22, the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

**Outreach—**Flavel Blyden: The Food Pantry will need increased donations for the winter.

**Stewardship—**Ken Clarke: Time and Talent info was sought the past few weeks at services; there was some response. The cards for the upcoming pledge drive are being reworked.

**Christian Formation—**Susan Moore: Christian Formation Director Bennett Card is writing a new Christmas pageant. During the pledge campaign, children and youth will be offered special cards to designate small monetary donations and talents.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lynn Kennedy, Registrar





# ***St. Francis Episcopal Church Financial Update***

**As of September 30, 2015**

	Actual	Budget YTD	Difference
<b>Total Contributions</b>	119,267.25	123,348.00	(4,080.75)
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	121,208.39	123,936.00	(2,727.61)
<b>Net Income</b>	(1,941.14)	(588.00)	

## **Grass Cutters**

Lawn mowing will resume in the spring.



## **Altar Flowers**

### **November 1**

The flowers on the Altar are given to the Glory of God for blessing our fallen heroes by Maureen Fuster.

### **November 8**

The flowers on the Altar are given to the Glory of God in celebration of Blanche Mouzon's Birthday.

### **November 15**

The flowers on the Altar are given to the Glory of God in thanksgiving.

### **November 22**

The flowers on the Altar are given to the Glory of God in celebration of Rebecca's Birthday by John & Vonia Ickes.

### **November 29**

The flowers on the Altar are given to the Glory of God in thanksgiving.



## **Vestry Lock-Up**

**November 1**

**Dosh Jackson**

**November 8**

**Ed Silva**

**November 15**

**Karen Palmerone**

**November 22**

**Susan Moore**

**November 29**

**Ken Clarke**



## **Building Usage**

Need to reserve a room?  
Contact Junior Warden  
Ron Simmons at (917)847-6604.