



InSpire

Newsletter of the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection in Alexandria, VA

June 2021

God, Resilience, and Positivity

From our Rector, The Rev. Jo J. Belser

I don't like drinking plain water. It tastes empty, so I squirt an artificially sweetened flavor into it. Some of you who know this have chided me about the use of artificial sweetener. However, you are rank amateurs compared to my new physical therapist. She recently gave me a ten-minute non-stop "chiding" that I'll summarize for you.

"Humans are 75% water," she said. "And in front of your water-filled body you tell your glass of water, 'I hate you.' What you are really saying is you hate yourself. And your body responds negatively to negativity. Haven't you heard that plants grow bigger if you talk to them with positive messages than if you ignore them or denigrate them..."

Although I still don't like to drink plain water, I've been mum about it, until now. But I've thought about my chiding. As Christians, we know that we are connected by energy—the Holy Spirit—in ways we cannot usually see or hear. We know that the energy which connects us with God and with each other provides information we don't necessarily experience with our better-known five senses. So, casting aside skepticism, I've embraced the notion that what we express (say, feel, think, expose ourselves to) can have a profound influence on us, either positively or negatively.

Take, for instance, the success of a friend. We can bask in our friend's success and experience their joy. Alternatively, we might let jealousy wreak havoc within us.

Along the same lines, I have noticed that when I watch news non-stop, be it Fox News or CNN, my anxiety is stoked and I become mired in the problems being reported on. If I am inspired, it is to win my position at all costs; if I am overwhelmed, I turn to negativity: Nothing can or will be done (unless someone else changes).

In contrast, I have known people who, in the face of great tragedy, have found the grace to not blame God or others. These people emerge from their tragedy more profoundly faith-filled, while others in similar situations get permanently stuck and become embittered. Over time, I've noticed what has unlocked grace in the face of tragedy has been a refusal to dwell on the bad without acknowledging the good.

There is always good if we look for it. A U.S. Forest Service chaplain named Kate Braestrup once observed that to find God in any situation we must look for the love. The exceptional people even find ways of *being* the love in the midst of their own great pain. I'm thinking of an Amish community and the members of Mother Immanuel Church in Charleston, South Carolina, whose loved ones were murdered. The height of resilience, it seems to me, is to look for the love and, when possible, to be the love.

I've been thinking about God, resilience, and positivity since Easter as I have looked around in awe at what you have accomplished: The Spire, filling with

working families at affordable rents; and our beautiful new light-filled church. Ever since we moved into our new building, people have reminisced with me about the process of accomplishing this huge task; each of them have remarked about Resurrection's flexibility and resilience.

A key to these traits has been to take whatever we are dealt and find a way to be flexible enough to re-think, re-work, and re-choose, all while rejoicing that God has, in this way, led us forward to an answer that is better than we had imagined. As Betsy Faga once remarked, God seemed to be leading us more by closing doors behind us than in opening only one in front of us.

Which brings me at long last to the point of this article. We've known for a long time that our parking assets would be insufficient to allow us all to worship on our property at the same time if we all drove to church and parked here. This is especially true with attendance higher at our now revitalized church. We each minimized this reality by imagining new ones:

- My joke: We would move into Goodwin House Alexandria next door and walk to church.
- Our hope: To use "excess" parking in The Spire's garage or perhaps even in Goodwin House's visitor lot.

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Mark your calendar for July 4 Worship (10:30am)
 and bring-your-own picnic (11:30am) at Fort Ward Park.

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2021 Resurrection Vestry

Senior WardenSusie Jones

Junior Warden.....Carolyn McDonald

Treasurer (ex officio).....Ken Gay

Register (ex officio).....Kim Hildred

Building Committee Chair.....Betsy Faga
(ex officio)

Community Ministries.....Ruth Allen

Outreach.....Maureen Bryant

Community Ministries.....Cynthia
Bullard-Perez

Parish Care.....Dick DeMeester

Worship.....Lawrence Huskin

Adult Education.....Ray Isaacs

Community Ministries...Barbara Langford

Children and Youth.....Ken Payne

Parish Care.....Dorothy Pennant

Outreach.....Peggy Tiedemann

Communications.....Susan Weber

Senior Warden's Corner

Susie Jones, Senior Warden



It was gratifying to see the new external cross mounted on our building. It makes the building look more complete and projects our presence to the outside world. Inside we see crosses everywhere: the great wooden rugged cross from our old building, Ken Gay's amazing banners and frontals, the brass processional cross and the one atop the banner pole, even the tiny crosses on the communion wafers. Aside from its significance as the near universal symbol of Christianity the cross has many meanings, some of them deeply personal, including sacrifice and redemption, frailty and forgiveness, fellowship with others who comprise the Body of Christ, communion with the Spirit. What does the cross mean to you?

On Pentecost Sunday May 23, The Very Reverend Ian Markham joined us for all three services and preached a sermon on the Trinity that we could understand. We got to thank him in person for giving us a place to hold services for the 29 months while our new church was being built. We also thanked the building committee for their work over the last eight years. It started as a vision and has been completed with some of The Spire apartments finished and occupied and the new church open for services. A job well done. The building committee members were Bob Barnett, Coral Childs, Mark Drake, Betsy Faga, Lenore Funkhouser, Lawrence Huskins, Bob Naismith, Ken Payne, Robert Reeves, Al Tiedemann, Kat Turner, Ray Warren, Susan Weber and Rev. Jo.

On May 20, the Grand Opening of The Spire apartment building was held on Zoom. It was attended by Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson, Congressman Don Beyer, and Rev. Jo. There was a video tour of the apartment building with a look at several of the apartments and the common spaces.

The food pantry continues to provide food for those in need. We have some new families each week. We are happy to fill a need in the community.

A Ministry Partner Returns

Now that we are back in our church, we are pleased to welcome back one of our previous ministry partners, Bethel Evangelical Church of Virginia and Pastor Binyam Etana, who will speak at our July 18 forum. The congregation will pay rent to use the church on Sundays from 3:00 - 6:00 pm and one evening a week. You will see Bethel's van in our parking lot. During our time away, Bethel worshipped at the Church of St. Clement on Quaker Lane.

The Sacred Ground group continues to meet once a month. Our meeting discussed the idea that race is cultural rather than biological. How do we acknowledge that race is a social construct while also recognizing the fullness of people's experiences and identities?

Save the date for the Sunday July 4th church service at 10:30 at Fort Ward Park followed by a bring your own picnic lunch.

The Worship committee continues to deliver the Sunday service bulletins to parishioners' homes so they can attend the services online when they cannot come in person.

Building Updates:

The acoustical paneling has been installed in the Nave. The quality of the sound has improved and the wood tone of the paneling adds a warmth and completed look to the area.

We now have a rolling lockable cart for the AV and computers used for the live streaming and recording of the church services. There is a new credenza in the Narthex for storage. The new tables for the Parish have all been assembled. Thank you, Dennis Jones

The water outlet to the Memorial Garden has been installed. We no longer have to lay hoses from the church building across the parking lot to water the garden. Hooray!!

We received the correct pole for our new cross so it can now stand next to the Altar.

We passed the Earthcraft Certification.

As we enter the summer season, and as COVID numbers continue to decline, we look forward to a further lifting of restrictions on our ability to worship and fellowship together.

Progress Report

Betsy Faga, Al Tiedemann and Kat Turner

We have now reached the point of “substantial completion” on the contracts for the church building and The Spire. This is a construction term that means that the buildings are sufficiently completed to the point where the owners can use them for their intended purpose. It does not mean that the buildings are totally complete -- that is the second stage in finishing a project. But it is an important milestone, especially for the contractor, as it generally means that the clock starts running for any subcontractor who wants to make a claim and it can also mean that the contractor can be released from certain performance bonds.

If the church building is substantially complete, what still remains? This is where the punch list comes in. A punch list is developed when the contractor, owner, and architect walk through the building and make a list of items that still need to be done before the owner is willing to say that the project is finally done. It may involve items that have been back ordered and are not on site yet (acoustical panels!) or it may mean that an item was damaged in installation or incorrectly installed and needs to be replaced. Here are a few examples of items that remain on our punch list as of the end of May: minor wall repairs, paint touch-up, seal around HVAC ducts where they enter the building, provide circuit breaker directory and identify all electrical panels, and cover emergency roof drains with brass fittings. The punch list is about 13 pages long and includes pictures of what is to be repaired. As the end of May, about half of the items, such as the May 26 final installation of acoustical panels, have been completed. And, the exterior cross on the west side of the building was installed May 28.

On May 18, we had our final Earthcraft inspection and the result is that we have accumulated a sufficient number of points to be certified as a “green building.” The certification is a City of Alexandria requirement for all new construction. What this means is that building materials, building methods, installed systems and appliances are energy efficient and environmentally friendly.

Kathy Graham, Deena Jaworski, and Rev. Jo have had their challenges working with our audio visual consultant to have the design of a pre-pandemic system upgraded to meet our post-pandemic needs. We hope that by the

time you receive *InSpire* the system will be fully operational.

By that time, we also expect that the railing along the sidewalk by the parish hall to have been installed. We are fortunate that AHC is assuming this cost.

At its May meeting, the Vestry approved parking agreements with Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) and St. James United Methodist Church. The agreement with NVCC provides 10 parking spaces on Sundays from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm in their B-1 Parking Lot, the lot just off Fillmore Avenue across from St. James Plaza. Since we are uncertain when we will be able to go to 100% capacity, there was reluctance to pay for the summer months when it is unlikely the spaces will be needed. The agreement, therefore, begins September 5, 2021. As a state institution the College is required to charge \$10/space per week + 4.5% administrative fee whether used or not. The agreement can be canceled with 90 days notice. A much briefer agreement has been agreed to with St. James Methodist Church for times other than Sunday mornings.

Next there is fit out. These are items that were not included in the construction contract but which still need to be added before the building can be used as the owner envisioned it. In our case this includes items like the chairs (the ones with arms are still on back order), the parish hall tables (now all assembled) and storage units for the classroom and kitchen. In some cases these items were included in the overall building budget, but other needs are being identified as we live in the space (ironing board!). That’s where the Alleluia Fund comes in, and Treasurer Ken Gay is happy to report that donations to this fund now stand at \$39,568.80. (Have you contributed yet?)

And then, there’s the organ. Our earlier expectations for the organ envisioned some new parts and some old parts reused, but for the most part, the pipes themselves would be the same pipes, just repositioned. Larry Trupiano, the “tonal finisher” who is helping Michael Hart adapt our organ to the new space, is convinced that the organ’s “mixture” stop—a set of pipes that enriches the sound of the plainer “principal” pipes—is inappropriate for our “new” organ and should be replaced.

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Resurrection's "What's Next" Prayer

Father, we thank you for bringing us “home” to our property and for keeping us together while we were away. We ask for some time to rest and, when you let us know the time is right, the courage, wisdom, energy, patience, and joy needed to discern what you are asking us to do next. Please keep us together as a church as we strive to be your hands, voices, and hearts in our community and in the world. We ask this in Christ’s name.

Mailing Address and Physical Location:

2800 Hope Way
Alexandria, VA 22311-2220



About *InSpire*

InSpire is the monthly newsletter of the Church of the Resurrection, describing the people of our congregation and our faith journey together. The following individuals contributed to this issue of *InSpire*:

The Rev. Jo Belser
Coral Childs
Emily Ewing
Betsy Faga
Lea Fowlie
Susie Jones
Al Tiedemann
Susan Weber
Lenore Funkhouser, photos
Ellen Turner, design and layout
Kat Turner, editor

Thoughts on Our New Church

Light is a very important concept in the Bible.

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light;" and there was light. And God saw that the light was good.... (*Genesis 1:1-4*)

It is you who light my lamp; the Lord, my God lights up my darkness. (*Psalms 18:28*)

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (*John 8:12*)

The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. (*Revelation 21:23*)

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (*1 Peter 2:9*)

So, it is entirely appropriate that when members of Resurrection are asked what they like about our new church, almost everyone mentions the light! Credit goes to architect Lee Quill who, from the beginning, had a vision of a light-filled new Church of the Resurrection. So many of the design elements -- the bright white walls, the windows letting in natural light, and the modern light fixtures -- combine to make our worship space radiant with light and very evocative of God's presence.

And, of course, as grateful we are for the generosity of Virginia Theological Seminary and Immanuel-Church-on-the-Hill in housing us for more than two years, we are glad to be back on our own property, living into the vision that sustained us during our exile. But, what else do we like about the church itself?

The altar hangings are mentioned by several as adding beauty to our worship services. Another member likes the open, egalitarian seating as reflective of our commitment to be warm and welcoming. We also like the comfortable chairs, the attractive floor, seeing nature right outside our windows. It was noted that the

acoustical panels have not only improved the sound, but have also added a warmth to the space. And, of course, our beloved cross, which is even more prominent in our new space.

The church is functional and efficient said someone else, as we recognize that we are still figuring out the best way to use our space. As Rev. Jo reminds us, it is important that we not try to replicate what we were used to at 2280 N. Beauregard and instead think of how we can best utilize the smaller but more flexible space at 2800 Hope Way. Some of the aspects of what we do together may change as we move forward (think post-pandemic communion), but the core of what happens on Sunday -- the worship of God as a community of believers -- is eternal.

And here is what a relatively new member of the congregation had to say, "I love that the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection stepped out in faith believing that God IS! This belief led to releasing the old building so that a new community of God could be housed."

"Let there be light," said God. Could He have had our new church in mind?

Progress Report, from page 3

Michael is hunting for that replacement now. While the delay is frustrating, we want the sound produced by the organ to be as exquisite as the space it is occupying. We understand that this improvement will have no effect on the installation's cost to us.

A similar process is going on for The Spire, which by Memorial Day had 44 units (39%) occupied, but the Church is not involved in that. But, there will also be a walkthrough and a punch list

developed for the site work and both the Church and AHC will be involved in that. We have not been ready to do the walkthrough to develop the site work punch list because we know there are a lot of big items still outstanding, most obviously the completion of the landscaping near the Memorial Garden and on the side facing Beauregard Street and the second layer of asphalt on the parking lot and Hope Way. These have been delayed by several factors including Verizon's failure to remove all the low voltage wires on poles along Beauregard

Street, the busy spring schedule of the landscaping subcontractor, and the monumental staircase encroachment issue reported on in the last issue of *InSpire*. The City Council approved the encroachment at its May 15 meeting, but there is still an administrative requirement for two more reviews. In the meantime, Harkins is not billing the church further until the work is completed, and the Church has not released the 10% retainage of the full contractor amount that is being held in escrow.

Rector's Column, from page 1

• Our fantasy: To use others' parking here or across Beauregard Street and walk or get a shuttle to church.

None of these are panning out. And I hope they don't, at least without us seriously considering how to look for the God-gift being given us: The opportunity to truly revision what worship is for us. Whatever the parking "solution" is—and

I'm confident we will collectively find one—I ask you to consider our true goal: To tell others about Christ Jesus and provide the sustenance to allow us to continue to be the hands, voices, and hearts doing God's work in the West End of Alexandria and in the world beyond.

Let me be clear: I would rejoice if we find a way to worship together in one large service. Maybe you'll carpool or take the bus or Uber up or God will lead you to

suggest another even-more-brilliant solution. What I'm pitching here is the need to be resilient and flexible—in other words, to use our great strength—to include room for growth, in in numbers and in our faith.

By the way, I drink my water, but now I thank it for its service as I ever-so-quietly squirt flavor into it.

A Reflection on Revisioning, Redevelopment & Building Process

Betsy Faga

How do you reflect on eight years that seemed forever and at the same time went so fast? I do so first by saying "What an amazing church community we are!" Yes; we had Rev. Jo, dedicated committee members, retirees with more time than others. But everyone saw us through the discernment process, the planning process, the demolition of our original church, our time in the wilderness, our return to a new church, and the celebration of 113 families next door that have affordable housing. We remained a unified congregation with a goal in mind. What a journey of faith it has been. So many memories flash through my mind – some known to you and probably some unknown.

Central to the process has been communication and prayer. Parishioners have been continually updated on the project through Rev. Jo's weekly *e-Notes*, articles in the monthly newsletter *The Spire/InSpire*, and congregational Forums at all important junctures. And as a community we said our Resurrection prayer during every service. The prayer changed more than eight times over the years to reflect the status of the project.

However, let's return to the beginning. As we began the search process for a new rector, I so clearly remember Karl Boughan saying at a Vestry meeting that we needed to have more in-depth conversation with the congregation about our declining financial situation. As Senior Warden, I added that it had to be something beyond saying we'll do more yard sales, silent auctions.... Quiet conversations followed with our Interim Rector Carol Spigner (Hancock) and Lindsay Ryland, our Diocesan contact. In the end, rather than saying "stop the presses," we agreed at a congregational Forum to "stop the search" for a new Rector. We took time to revision who and what we were being called to be.

What followed was a year of engagement by all who were interested. Planning Forums, working groups (6 of them with over 25 parishioners participating), exploring 21 different ideas. Robert Reeves, Kat Turner and I sat in Alexandria restaurants picking the brain of Helen McIlvaine, then Deputy Director of the Office of Housing, who threw her support

behind us from the get-go. That same team met several times with the lay leader at Clarendon Baptist Church who led their affordable housing project. In mid-2013 we called Rev. Jo, who had been serving at Resurrection on a non-stipendiary basis, to be our Priest-in-Charge and to bring her talents and deep faith to the journey we were undertaking. By the end of 2013, the congregation voted to pursue the **Bold Idea** to demolish our church and replace it with affordable housing and a new church. In groups of 2 or 3, Redevelopment Committee members traipsed around Virginia and Maryland to interview 11 for-profit and non-profit developers. By the end of 2014, the congregation voted to sign an agreement with AHC Inc. to be our developer. The following years brought building designs, draft agreements between the church and AHC, multiple meetings with the Bishops and the Standing Committee. The initial design and funding proved to be unworkable so submission for low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC) was delayed a year. AHC scaled back the project design and Resurrection agreed to a smaller financial package for the ground lease. This meant redesigns, City hearings and approvals, and community meetings. Approval of LIHTC in 2018 cleared the way to move full steam ahead. The church was decommissioned in late 2018 and demolished.

During the eight years we shared the roller coaster ride of emotions. Yay, the feasibility studies said our Bold Idea was doable! Oh no, the financing just doesn't work. But God showed us a way forward if we revised our expectations. Moving forward meant saying good-bye to our Resurrection Children's Center of 40 years, but knowing it would help expand the inclusive pre-school of Fairlington United Methodist Church. We watched the children's playground move, but knowing it would be used by the children at Virginia Theological Seminary. We let go of ALIVE! Last Saturday distribution and uprooted our food pantry, but found a new partner in St. James Methodist Church. A high when AHC was awarded the critically important low-income housing tax credits. Sadness and tears in saying good-bye to a building that had been a church home to some for more

than 40 years. Moving hesitantly to worship at Virginia Theological Seminary -- where will we find space, where do we go, where do we park? What we found was a community that embraced us and that we embraced.

I know you've heard the series of thanks to our partners several times already, but I can't reflect on our process without also mentioning them – The City of Alexandria, AHC Inc. developer, Cunningham Quill Associates architects, Harkins Builders, Dominion Construction Group. From my vantage point these were deeper than just business partnerships. In my view each partner truly cared and provided strong support for what we were doing. Each went above and beyond in educating us, watching out for us, helping where they could. They are partnerships that built some lasting bonds and will have an impact into the future.

I also reflect on the talent God brought us when it was needed. It just so happened (or was it really just coincidence?) that Kat Turner, Robert Reeves and I had recently retired and stepped up to the plate to devote time to this new project. Kat, whose amazing organizational and leadership skills, led us through many planning Forums and has been liaison with AHC and Harkins. Robert who said part of his career job was to worry became our worrier and liaison to our attorneys and organ builder. Mark Drake whose profession as an architect helped us decipher and advise on the architectural drawings from our project architect. Al Tiedemann who shone during our move to the Holy Hill and used his work experience to be our liaison to DCG as they constructed the new church. Ken Gay who tracked the financial end of the project and is doing so many of the nitty gritty tasks to get us settled in our new church. Bob Barnett, Coral Childs, Lenore Funkhouser, Lawrence Huskin, Bob Naismith, Ken Payne, Ray Warren, and Susan Weber played significant roles on one or more of the committees taking on specific tasks of the time.

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Reflection, from page 5

It gives me great joy to be part of a community that, with God's help, revitalized ourselves by taking charge of our future and not just "letting it happen." When time after time we faced adversity and Rev. Jo said if God wants this to happen, it will happen; I finally began to believe it. And time after time I saw it play

out. I don't think there can be anyone in this congregation who hasn't seen the hand of God in what we have accomplished.

I give thanks for the team that shared their talents and worked together so effectively, for Rev. Jo's energy and lessons of faith, and to this congregation for putting your trust in me and the committee members

and supporting us all along the way. Personally, I've learned about affordable housing, development and construction; but most importantly you gave me the opportunity to take a journey that has deepened my faith. For that I thank you.

Alleluia, **WE** did it! Thanks be to God!

Pentecost Sunday

What is Pentecost Sunday anyway? Commonly known as the church's birthday, it marks the occasion recounted in Acts 2 when the followers of Christ were together and a "sound like the rush of a violent wind" descended from heaven and the Spirit gave the people the ability to speak in other languages, and, more remarkably, to understand each other. Peter knew what this meant, "Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved," no matter where they came from or what language they spoke. The important fact of Pentecost is not that we are all different, but that we are all God's children, united by His love.

At Resurrection we honor the tradition of our diverse backgrounds by displaying the flags of our native lands and ethnic heritages. But, we don't have to speak in tongues! We have Cor Medrick in our congregation to do the heavy lifting for us. He dazzled us this year with his reading about the first Pentecost, switching seamlessly from language to language, not once or even twice but ten times! His mother Amy was there displaying the flag appropriate to the language so that we could follow along more easily. Not to be left out, Ethan Medrick introduced Resurrection's new Pentecost spirit banner to the 9:00 am congregation as he waved the tongues of flame over our heads.

We were graced by the presence of the Very Rev. Ian Markham, dean and president of Virginia Theological Seminary, as our guest preacher. As our host at VTS for the last 29 months, he expressed his enthusiasm for seeing our new church home, calling the building "spectacular space" and "fresh, light, vibrant and elegant." He congratulated us for what we had done as a congregation noting that it has no parallel in Virginia and acknowledged the extraordinary leadership of our rector Rev. Jo.

Dean Markham shared with us the

findings of more than 100 studies that have shown that church attendance actually contributes to longevity by an average of 2 - 3 years. Why is this, we wondered. Well, we had the benefit of an internationally known theologian to tell us why, and, incidentally, to give us a preview of the theme of the upcoming Trinity Sunday.

He described the three natures of God -- the creator, origin, genesis; the advocate redeemer, word; the spirit and energy. These capture the oneness of God in all His complexity. It is the Spirit who enables us to come together in prayer and worship in our new church, bringing us into the presence of God and giving us an understanding of our place in the universe as being made for eternity. And, Dean Markham believes, it is this presence that sustains the faithful and provides physical health as well as spiritual health benefits to believers.

The Pentecost service also provided an opportunity for the congregation to thank the many people who worked so diligently over the last 8 years to bring us to this new space: The Discernment/ ReVisioning Committee, the Redevelopment Committee, the Building Committee (all led by Betsy Faga), the senior wardens who guided the vestry through oh-so-many crucial decision points, and our stalwart treasurer Ken Gay whose myriad financial projections and sharp pencil kept us on track.

Truly Pentecost 2021 was a day of celebration for Church of the Resurrection.



West End Food Pantry and COVID-19

Emily Ewing and Lenore Funkhouser

The West End Food pantry continued to operate during the pandemic -- one of only a few to remain open during this time. At first, we were not sure we would be able to continue to operate, as the majority of the volunteers from the four churches who work at the pantry are elderly. This problem was solved when Phyllis and Anthony Johnson of St. Joseph's Catholic Church stepped up and said they would host the pantry every Monday night. A few months ago Resurrection nominated Phyllis and Anthony for Alexandria's Joan White Volunteer Award and they won - deservedly so! Without their hosting the pantry, we could not have stayed open.

Then the only problem remaining was how to get the pantry ready for Monday nights. The Resurrection morning crew agreed to continue setting up the pantry as long as everyone wore masks and socially distanced. We also kept the garage doors open to circulate the air. It sometimes got quite "chilly" during the winter months. THANK YOU, Peggy Tiedemann, Maureen Bryant, Kathy Parnell, David & Emily Ewing. THANK YOU to Coral Childs and Carleigh Rockett, Judy Isaacs and Betsy Faga for the extra help when needed.

Pre-pandemic, we usually saw 23 families on Monday night. When the pandemic began, the numbers soared. For a good many months we were seeing 75 - 80 families a week. One week we had 95 guests! Since May our numbers have been in the 40s, so things have eased up quite a bit. Vaccinated members of the four churches are returning to help on Monday nights.

Because of COVID, the Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB) has been closed to pantries. Instead, they provide food to ALIVE! which then supplies us. Every Monday morning the ALIVE! truck arrives with eggs, bread, meat, produce and plastic bags of canned and shelf stable goods. If they can, they also bring us supplies that we request, such as peanut butter and cereal. CAFB has now re-opened to pantries but there is no hand shopping. So ALIVE! continues to bring essentials such as meat, eggs, bread and produce. There has been an outpouring of support from the community. Strangers stopped

by the pantry with carloads of food they had collected. Linda Patterson of St. James put the pantry on the Neighborhood Amazon wish list and the response was amazing. One Monday a lady walking by, stopped, and asked us what we needed. She is now our source for jelly whenever we need it. Food was also donated by parishioners of Resurrection, St. James, St. Joseph's and First Christian.

The grant that ALIVE! received from the Federal Government runs out soon. May 31st may be the last time we receive bread. We are hoping that CAFB resumes hand shopping soon so we can once again shop for meat. We are working on a plan to begin buying eggs once ALIVE! can no longer supply them to us. We should still be able to get fresh produce. Thanks to the grant we received from CAFB (see below), we have plenty of canned and shelf stable food to give out.

Every week each family receives a dozen eggs, meat, bread, produce, items from Panera, two plastic bags of canned goods and one brown grocery bag which varies from week to week. In the brown bags we put 5 to 6 items plus bread and Panera goodies. The Panera team (Kat Turner, Robert Reeves, Dennis Jones, Betsy Faga) take turns going to Panera in the early dawn hours on Monday morning to pick up donations. Panera had temporarily suspended donations due to COVID but has now resumed.

It has been decided to keep the food pantry permanently at St. James Mission House. Everything is already organized and set up. Plus, there is more room for storage of food and parking for clients. It will be easier for the clients not to have to change venues.

In February 2021 Resurrection applied for and received a CAFB grant of \$13,315. The money was credited to our account and had to be used by May 31st. These funds allowed us to augment the number of items we received from ALIVE! so that we could maintain the amount of food given to clients. St. James offered the use of the Mission House to store the food we bought. In order to have CAFB deliver the food to the pantry, we had to order a minimum of 1000 pounds -- every week! CAFB waived their normal \$65 delivery

fee. We had 13 deliveries in total - from March 8 to May 27. We received a total of 13,285.31 pounds of food - that is over 6 tons! We were able to spend \$10,359.12 of the grant money. Our biggest order was for 2,180lbs, literally a ton of food. There was a lot of aspirin consumed that night!

Lenore Funkhouser ordered the food and took care of the paperwork. A hearty band of volunteers came on Thursdays to unload and store the food - a very big THANK YOU to Bill Hannon of St. James and Robert Reeves, Dennis Jones, Kathy Parnell, Peggy Tiedemann, Maureen Bryant, Emily & David Ewing from Resurrection. THANK YOU to Lenore for wrestling with the computer and ordering food. There is no way we could have taken advantage of this grant without all this help.

The future for the pantry looks very bright. Things are beginning to return to normal. There is one big difference. Previously, clients were allowed to come into the pantry and pick out their food. With COVID, this stopped. Now a table is set up outside; when a client arrives, bags of food and produce plus a dozen eggs are put on the table. The client gets to choose which type of meat they want (chicken and fish are the most popular) and it is brought to the table. The client then goes to the table, puts their food into a grocery cart and takes it to their car. One lady puts the boxes and bags on her head and carries them! We have decided to keep this system in place after COVID. It is much more efficient and definitely much safer.

The pantry continues to evolve to meet the needs of our clients. For example, every third Monday diapers (supplied by St. Joseph's) are distributed. St. James and Resurrection supply hygiene bags every few months. Our main focus is food but we occasionally give out donated items such as toilet paper and laundry detergent.

We are looking forward to the churches once again manning their Monday nights. This will give Phyllis and Anthony a much needed break.

Carleigh Rockett Moves On

Susan Weber

We are very happy and a little sad to report that Carleigh will be graduating from TC Williams High School in June and will start Christopher Newport University in Newport News this fall. She is excited and happy to experience this new adventure. She considered schools in New York State where her grandparents and other family members live, but she liked Christopher Newport University and it is about the size of TC Williams, so it won't be too big a change. It also has courses she is intrigued by, such as cryptology and theater.

Carleigh grew up in Alexandria and moved through the system from Polk to Hammond to high school. At TC Williams she participated in several activities including the Gender and

Sexuality Alliance, Business Leaders of America and the Science Bowl. But her most fun outside activity involved working behind the scenes in theater productions, both at TC and at the Community Theater of Arlington. She worked on building sets and helping to manipulate other behind the scenes activities.

For the future she is thinking about many opportunities. Being a librarian, and working in technology are two current possibilities. She is pleased to be hired by Resurrection to run the Sunday morning technology, including audio and Facebook requirements.

Many of us remember Carleigh as a young girl at church suppers, running around the church, and of her own volition, watching

over younger children. We have watched her grow and mature, which has been a special blessing.

What will we do without the friendly smile of Carleigh to brighten our lives? But we will see her on returns home, and will have the opportunity to hear about her further adventures. Make sure you congratulate her on her many achievements and wish her the best in the next phase of her life that starts this fall. And add her mother, Coral Childs, to your prayer list, because even though she is excited for Carleigh, she will miss her greatly.



An Alexandria Pilgrimage - The Bruin Negro Jail 1707 Duke Street

Coral Childs

Within walking distance of the Alexandria African American Heritage Park is the Bruin Negro Jail. It's a two-story brick house at 1707 Duke Street. If you've ever eaten at the Table Talk restaurant, you've probably seen it.

During the 1800s, Alexandria was the center of the American slave trade and slave markets were a major part of the city economy. In 1843 Joseph Bruin and his partner Henry P. Hill formed a slave trading firm, Bruin & Hill, which would become the largest and most profitable firm in Alexandria. Bruin sold enslaved people held in his Negro Jail and shipped them to plantations in the Deep South on steamships.

Bruin purchased the two-story brick building at 1707 Duke Street and an adjacent house for \$1,500 in 1844 from Edgar L. Bentley, the grandson of the original owner and builder, John Longden. Bruin's family, which included his wife, mother, two sons, and five daughters, lived in the adjacent house while the 1707 Duke Street building served as a holding facility for enslaved people.

No records of Bruin's slave-trading business survive except for advertisements for the purchase of enslaved people in the Alexandria Gazette: "NEGROES WANTED: All persons having Negroes to sell will find ready sale and liberal prices for them by calling at the new

establishment of BRUIN & HILL."

At the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, Bruin fled Alexandria and was later captured and confined in the Old Capitol Prison in Washington until the end of the war in 1865. During this time the jail became the Fairfax County courthouse, until it was returned to Bruin upon his release and used as his private residence.

When Bruin died in 1882, his estate sold the property the following year and the jail and residence served as private dwellings for various owners from 1869 to 1951. In 1951, it was sold again and has been used it as a private business ever since. The house is all that remains of the large compound that occupied the site.

Grand Opening of The Spire

Members of the Church of the Resurrection, were your ears burning at noon on Thursday, May 20? They should have been! That's when our developer AHC celebrated (virtually) the Grand Opening of The Spire apartments. Participants in that event included Congressman Don Beyer, Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson, Alexandria City Office of Housing Director Helen McIlvaine, and the many organizations

and corporations that had a role in the conceptualization, financing, and construction of The Spire. And as many of them spoke, they recognized our church and its members for our role in envisioning this project and shepherding it to completion. The presentations also included a video tour of the apartment building and a look at our church with Rev. Jo and Building Committee chair Betsy Faga.

Just a week and a half after the Grand Opening, AHC President and CEO Walter Webdale announced his retirement after 22 years heading that organization. A search for new leadership is underway. Resurrection is grateful for his belief in our project and the support he gave us throughout our efforts to provide affordable housing in Alexandria's West End.

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