



# Sounds of Saint Francis







# Welcome

to Saint Francis Episcopal Church in Potomac Maryland! Whether you have been a member of Saint Francis for decades or are new to our community, you will find here rich opportunities to worship the risen Lord, a warm welcome, and many opportunities to grow in faith and love.

**Our congregation boasts (humbly, of course!) one of the best music programs around, a strong tradition of preaching, rich Christian formation programs for all ages, and a true desire to help one another grow and flourish in all areas of human life. Wherever you are in your own walk of faith, we would love to have you with us, not because we want something *from* you, but because we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good at Saint Francis, and we want to share that *with* you.**

# Contents

**Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it until it receives the early and the late rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.  
-James 5:5-7**

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# Rector's Message

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*“The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness. And he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord.” Isaiah 11:2-3.*

The age of the Messiah, the Bible’s prophets stress, would be an age of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is active within the people of Israel in the Old Testament, descending on judges, kings, and prophets to equip them with wisdom and courage. But in days to come, when God came among his people as their true King, defeating the power of evil and making a new covenant, they taught that the Holy Spirit would be present and active in abundance, a gift for all.

Isaiah 11 describes the Messiah as a new king rising from David’s line. The Spirit would rest on him--remaining eternally to fill him with powerful gifts. Seven of these are enumerated: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, godliness, and the fear of the Lord. They relate to our ability to comprehend the things of God and to choose wisely and decisively about what we should do.

Jesus was conceived in the womb of his mother “by the power of the Holy Spirit,” as we say in the Creed (c.f. Luke 1:35), and the Spirit descended upon him at his baptism to mark him out as the one with whom God the Father was “well-pleased” (Mark 1:10-11). We see the Holy Spirit’s presence within Jesus in his deep understanding of others, his power to heal, and his faithful courage in fulfilling his vocation.

After his resurrection, Jesus bestowed the Spirit on the apostles (John 20:22), and the Holy Spirit came down even more dramatically at Pentecost, when St. Peter proclaimed that all who received the Gospel with faith and were baptized would be filled with the same spirit, abounding in the long-promised gifts that showed that the final age of the world, the time of God’s transforming presence, had come (Acts 2:17ff). Later, we see the Spirit working through the apostles as they design a structure for the church and make decisions about its mission (Acts 6, 15).

All those who belong to Christ share in his Spirit. The Spirit works in us to help us know the truth about God and ourselves and to believe it fully. He equips us with gifts for ministry, and fills us with virtues that reveal that “God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).

We believe that the Holy Spirit fills all who are baptized, and indeed, one of the prayers of the Baptismal liturgy paraphrases the great prophecy of Isaiah 11 (I have bolded the key words):

Sustain them, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give them an **inquiring** and **discerning** heart, the **courage** to will and to persevere, a spirit to **know** and to **love** you, and the gift of **joy** and **wonder** in all your works.



# Rector's Message, continued

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However, the Holy Spirit is also stirred up and renewed in a special way at Confirmation, where we receive “strength for the battle” of Christian living as adults, as a famous medieval phrase has it.

Confirmation originated in the special blessing given by a bishop at the close of the baptismal service in the early church. Bishops, as successors of the apostles, receive a unique power to bestow the Holy Spirit on God’s people (this is also why they ordain candidates for Holy Orders). They also connect us tangibly with the Church’s ministry across the world and throughout the generations.

As the church grew, it became impossible for bishops to preside at each baptism, and the practice arose of reserving confirmation for a later age, when those who had been baptized before could affirm the promises once made for them after a suitable course of instruction. Life becomes more complicated on the cusp of adulthood. We face new temptations and make choices that often determine our course of life. Powerful prayer for the Spirit’s gifts at this moment seemed especially fitting.

In the Episcopal Church, those who were not confirmed as young people receive confirmation as they become members of a local church. I have often seen that the decision to come back to church after time away or to commit to a congregation with a distinctive form of prayer and discipleship comes at a time of transition. We have children or struggle through a serious illness or the death of a loved one, and through that process, our hearts are opened, and we feel a new longing for God’s presence and life among his people. The baptismal faith we affirm is a public testimony to what we have come to know, and the gift of His Spirit through the bishop’s prayer strengthens us for the joys and challenges that lay ahead.

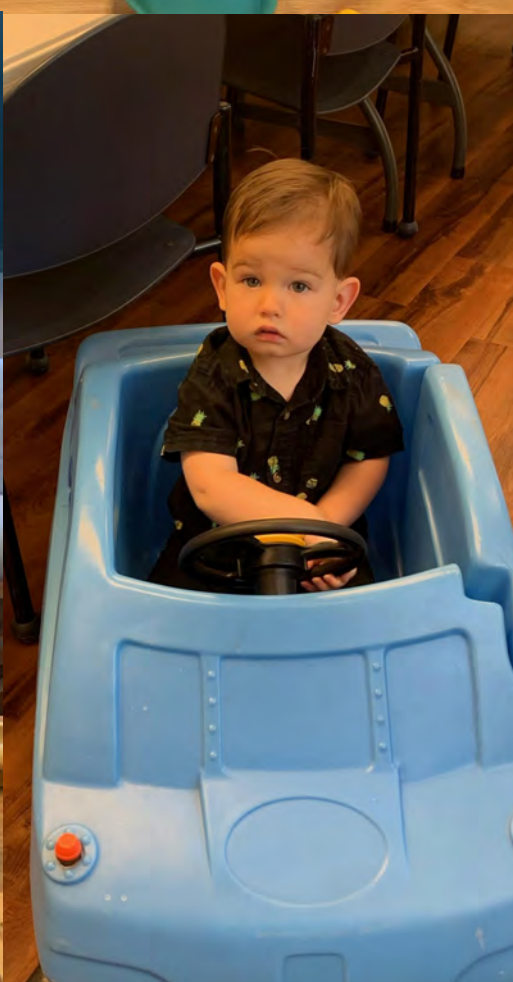
**Bishop Mariann will be visiting St. Francis on Sunday, December 17,** as she does about every three years, and she will administer confirmation during her visit (as well as receiving into the Episcopal Church those who were confirmed by a bishop before--Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians). There will be opportunities for youth and adults to prepare for confirmation this fall. If you are new at St. Francis, expect to receive a personal invitation to join in. But maybe you have been worshiping here for many years, but have never received this special grace. Confirmation is for you as well, an invitation to the age of the Spirit, to be filled with the gifts and graces God shares out on all who belong to him.

In Christ,  
Fr. Mark +





**Our cribbery is a popular place to be these days! Sarah Harich could use some assistants willing to help out on busy Sunday mornings!**



In no particular order: Teddy, Henry, Caroline, Louise, James, Vega, Theo



# Back to School!

Come to St. Francis to kick off the school year! There are events for all ages. Join us for blessings, fellowship, and fun. Bring along family and friends!



## Sunday School Resumes September 16!







**Deuteronomy 6:5–9 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.**

*James Hollis Davis, son of Caroline and Peter Davis, we welcome you to the household of God!*

## Sunday School



Sunday School has been (sort of) on a hiatus for the summer, though Norma has kept the little ones learning through all these months. Last year, the children learned about Jesus and the Bible while going on scavenger hunts, making crafts, and singing songs. We also had a Christmas pageant, a live nativity, and lots of fun!

On September 10th, parents can sign their children up for Sunday School or they can email Kathy Herrmann. A parent meeting, with overview of the program will be provided along some pointers for teaching the curriculum and the age group.

Children ages 3-7 meet from 9:00-9:45 (older children will be brought into the service during the sharing of the peace, just before the Eucharist). Children aged 8-13 meet at 10:30am (concurrent with Adult Forum). If you would like to register your child or to help out, contact our Sunday School director, Kathy Herrmann. We need volunteers who are willing to take just a handful of weeks (for either age group) or who want to help plan weekly crafts or games for the younger children around biblical themes. Thanks for supporting Christian education.





# Love in Action

**MERCY Youth, Parents, and Outreach Heroes have been busy this summer!**

**Amazing teens and parents jumped in to work at the Manna Food Bank last month-- always a favorite activity!** Volunteers sorted for two hours, finding some very strange and long-expired donations! The teens want you to know that when you are asked give to food in food drives, please don't use the opportunity to donate unwanted expired foods out of your pantry. The hungry deserve better from us.



**Two weeks later, a group of 20 volunteers went to the DC Central Kitchen in Washington D.C.** It was amazing to see this organization that trains people in food service. We were so impressed with the professionalism and kindness of these men and women, all of whom came to DC Central Kitchen from difficult situations that made it difficult to find employment-- a criminal record, victims of human trafficking and abuse, and all kinds of other challenges! The food made there goes to local markets and shops ("food deserts" where finding fresh food would be otherwise impossible), after school programs, homeless shelters, soup kitchens. Find our more: <https://dccentralkitchen.org/mission-history/>

**Overheard:** "Huge thanks for organizing the DC Central Kitchen outing on Saturday! What a neat organization. Sumire and I both enjoyed the experience, and it was also nice to get to know some other teens!"

"The operation [at DC Central Kitchen] was amazing! I had no idea what a huge organization this was! It was really fun to see all the good they do and to get to join in."





## **Outreach Partner Profile - Manna Food Center**

The mission of Manna Food Center is to eliminate hunger in Montgomery County through food distribution, education and advocacy. Its vision is to build a community where people at all times have access to nutritious food.

When Manna opened its doors in 1983 in a vacant elementary school, it began with a single pledge of \$3,100 and a donation of 16,000 pounds of food. At that time it served a few hundred people. Today, Manna distributes approximately 12,000 pounds of food daily and serves more than 37,000 people.

Food insecurity in Montgomery County: One in four people in Montgomery County are estimated to experience food insecurity. One in three elementary school children qualify for the county's Free and Reduced Meals program. Twenty percent of county seniors live below the self sufficiency standard. The largest of Manna's food distribution programs are Food for Families and Smart Sacks. Manna offers an average of 3,300 families approximately 45 pounds of perishable and nonperishable food each month. Manna's Food for Families program begins with pickups from about 40 grocery stores and farmers markets across the county. Many community groups, both civic and religious, donate food. St. Francis, for example, collects shelf-stable items several times a year for Manna. Manna and a large cadre of volunteers then sort produce and combine fresh food with shelf stable items for delivery to a number of satellite distribution centers around the county. This operation takes place daily at Manna's warehouse in Gaithersburg.

School-based Programs. Nearly 45 percent of the county's public school students are enrolled in free or reduced cost meals at school. Manna supplements this assistance by offering weekend bags and a pantry program at various schools. Sustained healthy eating is encouraged through educational materials and recipes distributed throughout the school year. Manna's Smart Sacks Weekend Bag Program's goal is to supplement student's and their families' meals over the weekend during the school year. Each bag contains nutritious staples such as whole grains, lean proteins, low- or no-sodium canned vegetables and fruits, and more. Manna also operates pantries at schools, which offer fresh produce and nutritious, shelf-stable items.

Manna's Impact in the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022 includes:

- 29,704 individuals supported (Food for Families)
- 4,241 students supported (Smart Sacks)
- 85,992 bags of weekend food distributed elementary school partners
- 32 pantries at schools supporting 1,622 households
- 3.8 million pounds of food distributed
- 810,842 pounds of food donated
- 174,287 pounds of fresh produce distributed
- 3 farmers markets, 32 farms donate produce

Manna's mission to end hunger in Montgomery County could not be realized without the help of its dedicated volunteers, who sort, pack and distribute food at the Gaithersburg warehouse. To express interest in volunteering, go to [www.mannafood.org](http://www.mannafood.org), click Get Involved and then click "Volunteer With Us."

-Diane Seward, Outreach Committee



# MERCYouth Fall Events

**17**  
Sept

## **Cookout and Campfire@ Pastor Allison's**

You're invited to Pastor Allison's home for burgers, hot dogs, s'mores, outdoor games, and stories around the campfire, 7-8:30pm. Email pastor Allison for more info.

**7**  
Oct

## **Rise Against Hunger @ SF**

Ten Thousand Meals in under 3 hours! Come do your bit for world hunger. 9am-noon. SSL Eligible

**15**  
Oct

## **Pumpkin Decorating @ SJ**

Decorate mini-pumpkins and decorate and make cards for sharing with nursing homes and members of the community who are home-bound. SSL Eligible. 7-8:30pm

**5**  
Nov

## **Garage Night @ Schneider's**

Want to learn to change a tire or the oil in your car? Adam Schneider (father of Will Schneider) is hosting "garage night" at his home to help teach us some hands-on skills! 6:30-8:30pm.

**12**  
Nov

## **Trivia and Games Night @ CEC**

Join us for food, and bring all your most obscure knowledge to share! 6:30-8:00pm.

MERCY youth group is a joint ministry of Christ Episcopal Church, Rockville, Saint James Episcopal, North Potomac, and Saint Francis Episcopal, Potomac. We strive to offer middle and high school students a place to thrive spiritually and emotionally, to learn about their faith, and to give back in service to their community. For more information or to be added to our MERCY email list, contact Pastor Allison Michael at [amichael@stfrancispotomac.org](mailto:amichael@stfrancispotomac.org). Locations are sometimes subject to change, so join the email list, so please do join our email list for updates.





## Carillon Concert and Lunch at Baker Park

John Widmann has been a blessing to Saint Francis this year, sharing his musical talents as our organist. Did you, know, though, that the carillon is the instrument that is perhaps his even greater passion? John plays recitals every Sunday at 12:30, year round, on the Joseph Dill Baker Carillon in Baker Park. He has now held his position as the city carillonneur for thirty years!

*Join us September 24 at 12pm for a picnic and to hear the concert. We'll pick up Black Hog BBQ to share. RSVP and bring \$15 to offset the cost. We can help arrange carpools for those who would like a ride.*

## Organ Fundraiser




We are about 75% towards our fundraising goal for our new organ console which will be installed this fall. We are looking for about \$15,000 more, so if you feel called to support the music ministry of this church, please make a gift on Realm or write a check with "organ project" in the memo line.

For those of you who have already contributed, thank you for your support!

# St. Francis Episcopal Church

## JOIN OUR CHOIR!



Practice Thursdays at 7:30pm

### Interested?

Contact John Widmann:  
[musicdirector@stfrancispotomac.org](mailto:musicdirector@stfrancispotomac.org)  
 (301)-365-2055

# Talk of the Town



Every month, we give you an opportunity to bring a friend! Offut's Crossroads, The Early History of Potomac.

September 13, 6:30-7:30pm

RSVP for Dinner at 5:30

Helicopter Medic and

Entrepreneur Cori Russell, co-founder of Fortitude Coffee

Company will share her

inspirational story about

overcoming obstacles with us

October 11, 6:30-7:30pm RSVP for Dinner at 5:30

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## Rise Against Hunger

Each year we gather to prepare meals for children over seas. Rise Against Hunger aims to stomp out hunger. Our Rise Against Hunger Experience events provide a fun, educational way for groups to literally lend a hand to people facing hunger across the globe. We combine an assembly line process with an educational experience to not only make a huge impact worldwide, but to touch the lives of those in your group." ([www.riseagainsthunger.org](http://www.riseagainsthunger.org)) This event is fun, fulfilling, and for the whole family. Join us at 9am Saturday, October 7th to make a difference! (SSL hours offered)

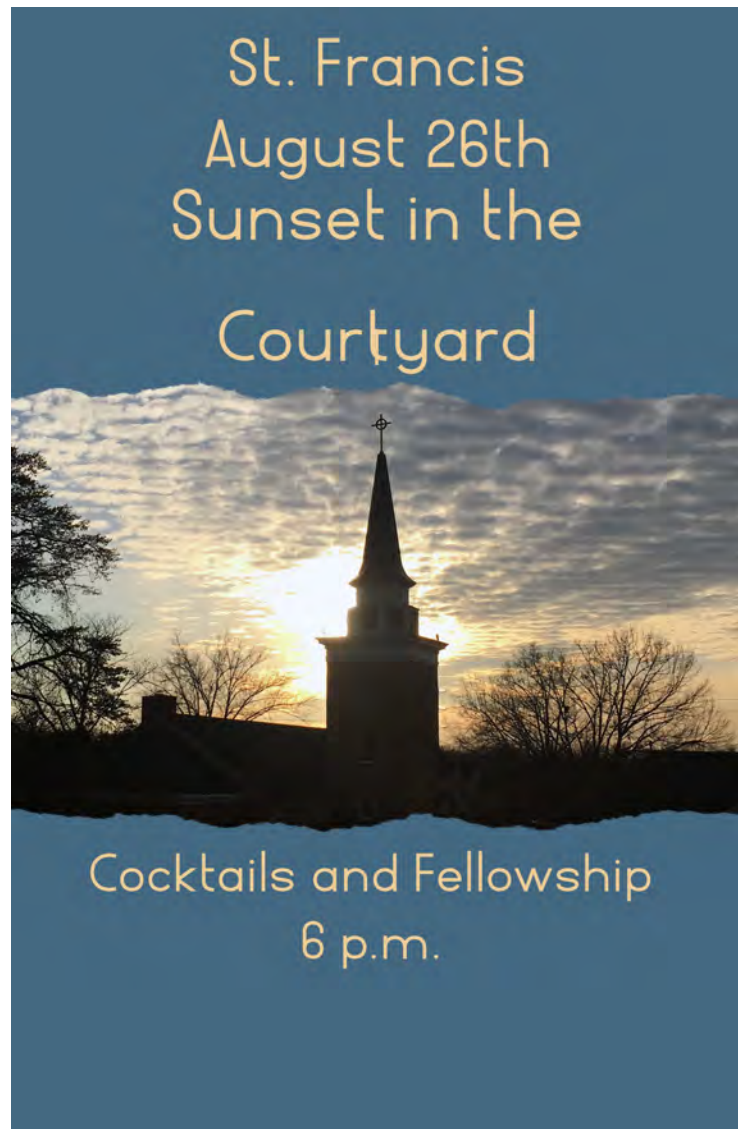
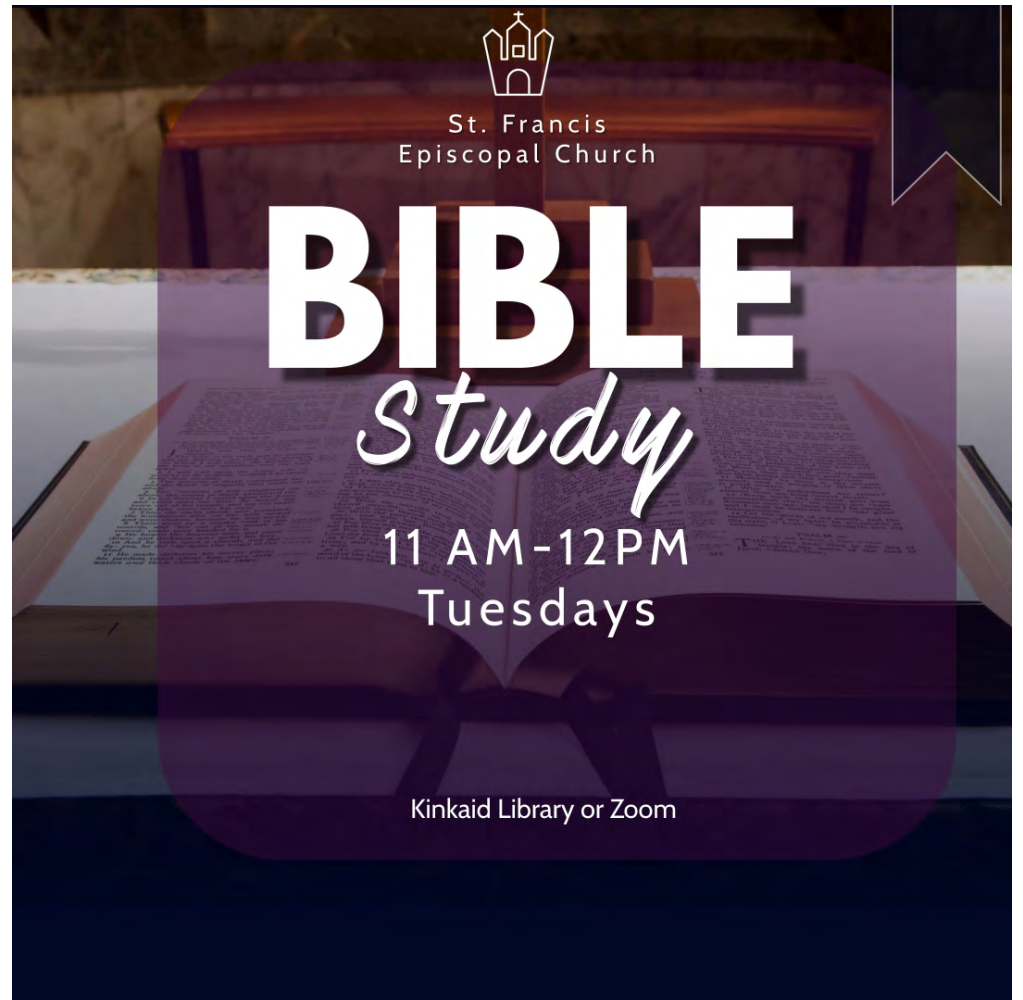




# Bible Study

**Song of Songs** is the great biblical romantic poem, thought by many interpreters over the centuries to be inappropriate for all but the most spiritually mature of Christians. It is one of the most beautiful and challenging books, and we'd love to have you join us as we explore (and bring a friend).

The Song of Songs has often been seen as a kind of trilogy, together with Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. Proverbs speaks of the practical matters of virtuous and prudent living. Ecclesiastes teaches us to be detached from the things of this world which pass away, and the Song of Songs teaches us about Love.



## Sunset Fellowship

Please join us for a lovely evening in the beautiful courtyard at 6 p.m. Sue Tendall is arranging a twinkling night of fantastic food and cocktails.



# Savvy Seniors

In June, the Savvy Seniors welcomed Ralph Buglass and his presentation covering the 250-year history of Rockville from a tiny crossroads community to the bustling government center of Montgomery County-and one of the nation's most diverse cities. Rockville ties to significant national events and figures. Join us in September for our next social get together.

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# All Creatures Great and Small

## A Blessing of the Animals for the Feast of St. Francis

**Bring your scaly, furry, or slimy animal companions for a blessing at 5pm on October 8th.** Our pets are a blessing to us, so we pray for God's blessing on them and celebrate God's love for the animal world!

Images (left): Saint Francis Blessing the Animals; (right): Some of our furry friends enjoy watching MERCY teens play charades.







HAPPY HALLOWEEN

# Holy Ghost Weenie Roast

Bonfire, S'mores, hot dogs,  
costumes and prizes!

Saturday | 28th

Oct | 5:00pm

St. Francis Episcopal  
Church

10033 River Rd Potomac





# *Saint Francis Lobsterfest*



*November 4, 2023. RSVP Required.*



# A profile of "Mr. Thai (by Chuck Wilson)

**Hoa Thieu Thai was born in 1949 in Bac Lieu, Vietnam.** At age 15 he moved to Saigon where he apprenticed then served as a shoemaker. He left Vietnam in 1979 because the North Vietnamese had overrun the South and were harassing Southern people and businesses. Thai had married his childhood sweetheart Maria and their first child Kim was a baby. They set sail from Saigon with some 500 others. Once at sea they were attacked by pirates from Thailand who took their possessions and attacked many and killed some.

Following a string of perilous adventures they wound up in Singapore where after a short time they were brought to the US by a Protestant church near Washinton, DC. They got Thai work in a shoemaking shop in DC staffed by women who ridiculed him because he spoke no English and because he produced shoes 3 times faster than any of them! He left after a short stay and got a good job at an auto-parts warehouse. He also worked weekends tending his neighbors' yards. One such happened to be the sister-in-law of a St. Francis parishioner to whom she offered Thai's services when she had extended travel. **That parishioner happened to be looking for a Sexton and thought Thai might help find him someone in the Vietnamese community.** Thai agreed and asked to see St. Francis. They took an extended tour at the end of which Thai said, "when I start?". That was the beginning of three decades of great service.

Thai quickly learned the systems and intricacies of maintaining a well-run church. He had his ups and downs.

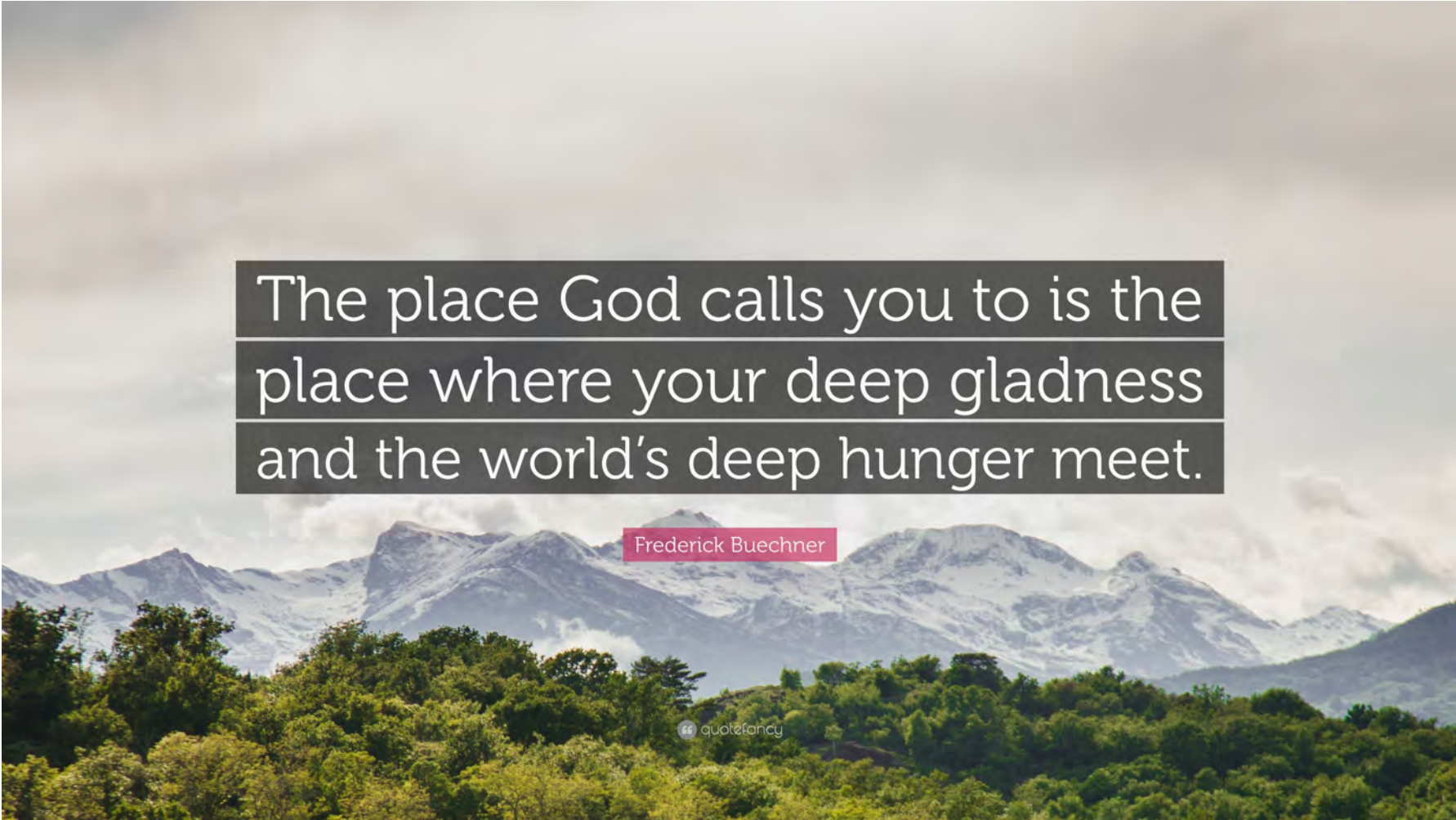
When a pipe bust in the Undercroft and filled it with several inches of water, it was Thai who waded in, drained off the water off and refurbished the rooms to a better state than before the flood.

When construction of the building addition of church offices, many new classrooms and the library and music room was underway Thai kept all other systems running so that parishioners generally experienced normalcy. When the Glenolden property was acquired it was Thai who re-habilitated the house and property. And Thai always made sure the Rectory was well maintained. In short, Thai took great care of St. Francis Church for 30 years and parishioners loved him. They planted a flowering tree near the front of the church in his honor and gave him a great send off when he retired.

Thai, a Roman Catholic, was asked what it meant to work in a Protestant environment for so many years. He said "Our almighty God is everywhere". That is Hoa Thieu Thai. God bless him!







The place God calls you to is the  
place where your deep gladness  
and the world's deep hunger meet.

Frederick Buechner

quote fancy

## What's Your Calling?

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As we look to the new program year, where do your passions and gifts meet the needs of your community? Do you want to feel like you're doing something truly important and lasting with your time? Did you know that satisfaction with We need Sunday School teachers (age 4-8, and ages 9-14), choir members, nursery volunteers, live stream operators, coffee hour hosts, youth mentors, outreach project volunteers, and more. None of these have to be long term commitments. If you want to organize a bible-themed game or craft with the kids for a few weeks to open Sunday School, we'll take it. Do you want to share your faith story with the older kids or put on a one-man Jonah monologue for all ages? Wonderful! Can you only sing in the choir when you're not visiting grandkids? No problem.

Saint Francis clergy and staff work hard each week, but we've not yet perfected the art of being in multiple places at the same time, and you have gifts for leadership and service that are different from ours and our needed in the body of Christ. Be the person that one of our kids (or adults) remembers for years to come because you gave them the greatest gift of all-- a glimpse of God's joy and love!

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**Print out the checklist and put it in the offering plate (or contact Kathy Herrmann or Pastor Allison to tell us how you'd like to help.)**



## Time and Talent 2023

**Prayer for Discernment:** *God our Father, You have a plan for each one of us, and by the power of your Resurrection you offer us a future full of hope! Give us the wisdom of the Holy Spirit so that we can see the shape of Your plan in the gifts You have given us and in the circumstances of our daily lives. Grant us courage to use the gifts you have given us in faithful service. Give us the freedom of Your Spirit, to seek You with all our hearts, and to choose Your will above all else. We make this prayer through Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

### Worship

- ☐ \*Acolyte/Crucifer
- ☐ Altar Guild
- ☐ \* Choir or Musical Offerings
- ☐ Flower Guild
- ☐ \*Ushers/Greeters
- ☐ \* Lay Reader
- ☐ Morning or Evening Prayer Leader
- ☐ Nursing Home or Homebound Member Visitation

### Education

- ☐ \*Children's Sunday School (Circle all that apply) guest speaker, craft planner, biblical storyteller or book reader, game organizer, confirmation mentor, ages 3-8, ages 9-14, older teens.
- ☐ \*Nursery Helper
- ☐ Christmas Pageant Coordinator

### Fellowship

- ☐ Coffee Hour Host
- ☐ Cooking or Cleanup: Help with cooking or serving food at a fellowship event.
- ☐ Host a Small Group Event at your home

### Outreach and Service

- ☐ \* Rise Against Hunger: Two coordinators, 40+ volunteers.
- ☐ \* Christmas Projects (Angel Tree, Christmas Food Baskets)
- ☐ \* Visitor Follow-Up

- ☐ **Other service projects:** Soup kitchen, homeless shelter, etc.

### Caring for One Another

- ☐ **Pastoral Care Committee:**
- ☐ **Freezer Cooking** to have on hand for members in difficult times.
- ☐ \* **Calling Ministry/Visitation:** Check in on homebound members periodically.

### Keeping Things Running

- ☐ **Property Committee:** Work to plan and execute property and grounds projects.
- ☐ **Stewardship Committee/Stewardship Talks**
- ☐ **Columbarium Committee:**
- ☐ \* **Odd Jobs:** Gardening, small repairs, grounds projects.
- ☐ **Records Management:** Help update contact information on file.
- ☐ \* **Event Photographer:** Submit your photos!
- ☐ \* **Sounds Contributor:** Write up events, profiles of members, and stories from around the community for our regular newsletter.
- ☐ \* **Children artists:** Submit your artwork of worship or bible stories for the bulletin!

*Children and Teens\* – especially check out items with an asterisk. Your gifts are welcome in worship, and children are excellent evangelists and welcome visitors for some of our homebound members!*





# Stewardship 2024

Greetings to all at St Francis!

I am writing to you on July 28th, as we bask in an Excessive Heat Warning from the National Weather Service for the Potomac area, with a heat index approaching 110 degrees. It will not be long, however, before we start to notice the days are getting shorter, the nights are a little bit cooler, and our children (or for many of us, our grandchildren) are returning to return to school.

Our internal clocks will tell us that this is the start of a “new year,” not one that is on any published calendar, but one that has signaled a time of change for us from our earliest years when, as young children, we would head off to school. We know that it will not be long before the leaves are turning and then falling, the days are crisp and the nights cool, and the Thanksgiving holiday and Christmas season are just around the corner.

With this change in season also comes our Stewardship season at St. Francis. Our gifts to St. Francis of the gifts that the Lord has entrusted to us for that time when we are here on Earth – our time, our talents, and our treasure – are what allows St. Francis to survive and thrive. Without them, there would not be a St. Francis. On behalf of the Vestry and the Clergy, I want to state at the outset that we are grateful for all your gifts of your time, talent and treasure to St. Francis – to worship our Father and to support our many ministries.

For many, the word “Stewardship” is only about money, but as we enter this “new year” come this fall, it is important to remember that our time and our talents are just as important to the life of the Parish – a parish with only money would not be much of a parish at all. So, as we approach this season, I encourage each of us to reflect on all that we are given and of that which we are given, what we can give back to St. Francis – not just money but our efforts and services that are so essential to a thriving parish.





# Stewardship 2024, CONT

To be clear, however, your financial support is essential to St. Francis. During Stewardship season, we are called upon to prayerfully remind ourselves of God's blessings to us by committing to support our church financially.

At the very beginning of October, each member of St Francis will receive materials in the mail regarding our Stewardship effort. When October comes, we request that you pledge to support St Francis financially throughout 2024. (If you are new and don't receive anything come October, please let us know.) Your financial support to St Francis enables us to advance our worship of Christ and all that St. Francis does. From enabling our youth Christian education, to keeping our church warm in the winter and cool in the summer, and supporting our Outreach ministries, your financial contributions will support the vitality of our Parish. Indeed, our pledges are our personal commitment to help St. Francis meet its financial obligations throughout the year.

Any pledge requires deep prayer and consideration. This reflection oftentimes reminds us of our many blessings we are given, and the phrase we say during our church service, "from thine own have we freely given." When we say that, we recognize that what we consider to be ours is actually a gift to us from our Lord. Our pledge is an acknowledgment of our thanks for the blessings that we have received and an effort to return to His work a small portion of that which we are given.

As we approach this Stewardship season, I ask that each of us reflect on all that we are given as temporary stewards on Earth, and of that, what we can give back to St. Francis.

Faithfully yours,

Prentiss Feagles

Vestry Member and Stewardship Chairperson



# Parenting for FAITH and Happiness

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## A Grant for PARENTS

**T**he Episcopal Diocese of Washington has given a grant to support parents

of Saint Francis (that's us), Saint James (North Potomac), and Christ Church (Rockville).

These three congregations have been collaborating for a number of years on Youth Group events, and MERCY has become a vibrant force for good in the lives of our teens and the life of the community. But along the way, we've realized a few things.

1) Parenting in 2023 is *hard*. If you're a parent, we don't have to tell you all the reasons why (it would take a book). But we do want to support you in the holy work of nurturing humble, loving, healthy, faith-filled kids with high-quality resources.

2) Our joint MERCY youth group or formation programming needs stronger ties between families, not just teens. We have wonderful families in all three congregations, and building a broader community with open conversations will benefit everyone.

3) This is what is called a "congregational growth grant," so the last objective is to provide some low barrier-to-entry, high-quality programming on a neutral site which you'd want to invite your parent friends to. Again, the broader this support network expands, the easier it becomes for all of us.

**We have been awarded \$6000 for 4-6 events over the next 18 months.** I (Pastor Allison) would appreciate having several Saint Francis families willing to consult and brainstorm on speakers, programming, planning and advertizing the events-- just two or three zoom meetings. Let us know if you'd like to offer your opinions!





## Some Prayers for the Season

- 01/ For a student's first day of school**  
O God, the strength of my life, make known your will for me in this place: help me to discover friends among strangers, to meet opportunities and challenges eagerly, and to do my daily tasks in your name. Give me strength to overcome my worries, and preserve me in your safekeeping, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- 02/ For teachers**  
O Lord, you who have called and equipped the teachers in our community, we pray for them today. Watch over them, provide for them, guide them, sustain them. May you be their sun and shield, so that they might do the work that you have entrusted to them and sense your care in these uncertain times. In Jesus' name.
- 03/ For a fruitful harvest**  
O gracious Father, you open your hand and fill all things living with plenteousness: Bless the lands and waters, and multiply the harvests of the world; let your Spirit go forth, that it may renew the face of the earth; show your loving-kindness, that our land may give her increase; and save us from selfish use of what you give, that men and women everywhere may give you thanks; through Christ our Lord. Amen.
- 04/ For first responders and public servants**  
Blessed are you, Lord, God of mercy, who through your Son gave us a marvelous example of charity and the great commandment of love for one another. Send down your blessings on these your servants, who so generously devote themselves to helping others. Grant them courage when they are afraid, wisdom when they must make quick decisions, strength when they are weary, and compassion in all their work. When the alarm sounds and they are called to aid both friend and stranger, let them faithfully serve you in their neighbor. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.





## Book Club

Book club enjoys fellowship and a wide variety of serious and light literary selections. The next book club, scheduled September 13th @ 11am will help decide the books for the 2023-2024 program year. Photos: Kathy, Jean, and Louise gather for the June book club gathering and a beautifully delicious spread!



## Talk of the Town: Lafayette

The Talk of the Town on June 14 hosted Patricia Maclay, who gave a fascinating presentation on “The History of Lafayette and his Farewell Tour.” Gaines Hurdle provided a delicious meal. Thank you to Gaines and all who helped!



## Samaritan Ministry Sunday

As part of our partnership with Samaritan Ministry of Greater Washington (SMGW), we welcomed Next Step participant Mr. Benjamin Timothy Morgan and the SMGW Executive Director, the Rev. David B. Wolf. Bob Janotta helped moderate the conversation, and we heard some moving stories about the work that is supported by our annual Lenten Appeal.

*But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him -Luke 10:33-35*



**St. Francis Episcopal Church  
Potomac Parish  
May 16, 2023 Vestry Meeting**

The Vestry convened online via Zoom on Tuesday, May 16, 2023, at 7:30 p.m., Fr. Mark presiding. Members attending: Ms. Tendall, senior warden, Ms. Bahar, junior warden, Ms. Byam, Mr. Feagles, Ms. Hurdle, Mr. Jannotta, Mr. Maroulis, Ms. Oleson, Mr. Ruf, Dr. Schneider, and Mr. Whitlock. Also attending: Mr. Smith.

**Invocation.**

Fr. Mark gave the invocation.

**Bible Study**

Ms. Oleson led the Bible Study. She read Psalm 16 as a meditation and Matthew 6:21, “Where your treasures are, there your heart is also.” She posed a question: What are your treasures – without God these can be meaningless. Ms. Oleson recalled a very serious illness she had several years ago, and how she experienced God’s presence in the hospital.

**Consent Agenda** *(previously circulated electronically)*

Minutes of April Vestry Meeting

The April Minutes are part of the Consent Agenda. There were approved with one minor correction.

**Rector’s Report** (attached)

Georgetown Hill School (GHS) Space Rental

Fr. Mark said that Peter Cromwell, CEO, had presented GHS’s additional rental space requests, which include the Music Room, a Closet in St. Francis Hall, and the Cribbery. Fr. Mark said that the most recent Lease Amendment would serve as the model for the new rental agreement with GHS. The school plans to take possession of the rental spaces in July 2023.

The Vestry discussed the disposable stage, which was left when St. Andrews vacated its space several years ago. The stage is stored in one of the spaces that GHS wants to rent. With the increase in the number of children in the parish, the stage may be needed when the children host events for the church, although the stage is heavy and requires several people to assemble and disassemble it, and the church nave has proven to be better for staging the children’s presentations. No one objected to disposing of the stage.

Posting Vestry Minutes and Financial Reports On-Line

Fr. Mark said that there had been a request that Financial Reports be posted to the Church Website (in addition to Vestry Minutes), which are already posted there. There was not consensus to make this change, and it was noted that Annual Financial Reports are shared at the time of the Annual Meeting, and monthly reports can be supplied on request.

**Vestry minutes are posted on the website after they  
are approved at the following meeting. If you're  
curious about the details of vestry business, visit  
[https://stfrancispotomac.org/vestry-meeting-  
minutes/](https://stfrancispotomac.org/vestry-meeting-minutes/)**



**Rector**

**Fr. Mark Michael**

mmichael@stfrancispotomac.org

**Pastor for Adult and Youth Formation**

**Rev. Dr. Allison Michael**

amichael@stfrancispotomac.org

**Organist and Choirmaster**

**John Widmann**

music@stfrancispotomac.org

**Property Manager**

**Shanti Nanan**

snanan@stfrancispotomac.org

**Parish Life, Sunday School & Outreach**

**Coordinator Kathy Herrmann**

kherrmann@stfrancispotomac.org

**Business Manager**

**Marybeth Krajcik**

accountant@stfrancispotomac.org

**AV and Livestream Technician**

**Sean Smith**

communications@stfrancispotomac.org

**Communications Team**

communications@stfrancispotomac.org

**Sounds of St. Francis Submissions**

sounds@stfrancispotomac.org

**General Information**

info@stfrancispotomac.org

Photo Credits: Kathy Herrmann, Adam Schneider,  
Sean Smith, Pastor Allison

