

InSpire

25,356 diapers for 1,688 babies (so far)

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Lori Thurgood at the May 8 Hammond Market

The most recent diaper distribution was held at the Francis C. Hammond Middle School on Seminary Road on May 8, a steamy day interrupted by an hour-long downpour. Michael Long helped transport many boxes containing 2,063 diapers to Hammond, diapers intended for up to 137 babies. I gave 1,441 diapers to 94 people for their babies. For the first time, multiple bags in every size (sizes 1-6) remained at the end of the day, reflecting the declining number of clients every month since the beginning of this year. In March, 123 babies got 1,849 diapers.

For the record, this makes 1,688 babies who received a total of 25,356 diapers from

Church of the Resurrection at twelve Hammond Markets.

Many thanks to Michael and to the bagging crew: Verleah Kosloske, Judy Isaacs, Kat Turner, Linda Goff, and Bruce Lazenby. And thanks also to Angie Armwood for re-stacking the boxes containing the bagged diapers in the office, as well as stashing the excess of donations (to be bagged for the July distribution) separate from the boxes going to Hammond on May 8.

Due to the large excess of diapers donated by our parishioners—you!—in April, as well as the bags left over from the May 8 distribution, we needed only 204 more diapers, all size 6, for the July distribution.

Those have been collected, so there will be a lengthy pause before we start collecting for September. As you may have heard said, this gave each of us a diaper respite so we could buy tuna for the drive that will end on June 8.

We will bag diapers for the July distribution at the church at 1:30 pm on July 7. All hands (and legs) are welcome, as we must move the boxes of diapers from the church office to the parish hall, break them open, slit the inside plastic packaging, and pull out the diapers before bagging can even begin. With a lot of help, it shouldn't take but an hour. Thanks for your consideration, and the diapers!

~ Lori Thurgood



The Rev. Jo Belser

“Over the summer we will evaluate how the new worship schedule is going—parking and other-wise—and then take a more time deciding what happens this fall than I took in putting the change in place.”

Well, I didn't see *that* coming!

By the time you read this, our Sunday worship services will be at 8:00 and 10:00 am on Sundays

Many of you have wanted to return to our long-time ago Sunday worship schedule of two services on Sunday, at 8:00 and 10:00 am. And I “get it.” Most of the people at Resurrection who have worshiped on Sundays at 10:30 am (or previously at 11:00 am) would prefer to all worship together.

The problem, of course, has been that parking is very limited here. So, after careful consideration, listening to all voices, and even tallying desires, we have been worshiping at 8:00, 9:00, and 10:30 am. But, starting on Pentecost Sunday (June 8), we suddenly will change to a 8:00 and 10:00 am schedule.

Why? First, not as many of you are attending church every Sunday. For some, it's hard to get moving in the morning, I hear. For others, you fell out of the habit or want to catch up on trips, visits with families and friends, or you have camping trips, sports games, and the like. For yet others—like Jay and Kathie Madden, Al and Peggy Tiedemann, and now Eleonora Gafton (who is moving to North Carolina in July)—it's the need to move out of the area.

I had been talking with the Vestry and with members of our 8:00 am worship service for two months about the possibility of combining our

8:00 and 9:00 am services into a single service at 9:00 am. However, there are some reasons to keep the 8:00 am worship time. Some people who attend then like the quieter worship without music. Others prefer the early time, especially those who get off the overnight shift at Goodwin House and worship here before going home.

In the course of that conversation there had been some talk about combining the 9:00 and 10:30 am services instead. However, I hadn't considered that to be an option because until very recently it would have been a stretch, parking-wise. Then, on May 25, our pianist, Michael Lewallen, was in the emergency room rather than at church, and that left nine people at the 9:00 am service trying to sing a *cappella*.

Michael learned the next day that he needed emergency surgery and that the post-operative rehab would be lengthy. I thought about the options. I knew from long experience that it is very difficult to find and hire a regular Sunday-morning pianist. Last summer the 9:00 am service had only Nick King to vocally lead our singing (may he rest in peace). I knew that Carolyn McDonald would play for the later service, when she is available. And then I looked

at the attendance numbers in recent weeks. For example, there were only 58 people in church all total on May 25, about 18% lower than last year's average. When I realized that this was a recent trend rather than a one-off fluke, it became clear that we could probably get by this summer with an 8:00 and 10:00 am worship schedule. I also realized that to do everything needed to implement such a change before our June 13-15 Shrine Mont weekend, we would have to move very fast.

So, beginning this Sunday, we will try it. Over the summer we will evaluate how it is going—parking and other-wise—and then take more time deciding what happens this fall than I took in putting the change in place. Ultimately, in the Episcopal Church, it is the Rector who gets to decide the worship schedule. Practically, and as a matter of choice, I like for everyone to get to weigh in and for the Vestry to help with worship decision-making. I expect this will be the case when we decide what to do next after we see how things go this summer. In the mean time, please pray for Michael's speedy and full recovery. As you may know, he still has major recovery challenges.

*~ The Rev'd.
Jo Belser*

Help for women in the Sudans

Wracked by violence in which thousands of civilians have been slaughtered, aid camps burned to the ground, and hundreds of children raped, Africa's largest war has torn Sudan apart and forced more than 12 million people from their homes. The conflict has created the world's biggest humanitarian crisis, according to the United Nations, which says at least 24,000 people have been killed, though activists say the number is far higher.

The American Friends of the Episcopal Church of the Sudans (AFECS), founded in 2005, is a network of individuals, churches, dioceses, and other organizations that seeks to focus attention on the pastoral and peacebuilding needs and priorities of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan (ECSS) and the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) and to enable American friends to assist both churches in meeting the needs of their peoples.

More specifically, AFECS:

- Fosters a network of people and organizations interested in being in relationship with and assisting our brothers and sisters in the Episcopal Church of South Sudan (ECSS) and the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS); works to enhance the effectiveness of the network in responding to their needs.

- Provides information on activities of the dioceses and the Provinces of the ECSS and the ECS and on their relationships with U.S. partners — Episcopal parishes, dioceses and organizations — in order to encourage proliferation of such relationships.
- Channels funding from donors to projects in South Sudan and Sudan, partnering with Episcopal Church leaders and laity, to promote education, generation of livelihoods, trauma healing, and peacebuilding.
- Advocates, in cooperation with other non-government organizations, on behalf of peace and justice in South Sudan and Sudan.

At its May meeting, our Vestry voted unanimously to donate \$2,000.00 from the Outreach Fund to AFECS.

Among the group's activities is an effort to support the business activities of small groups of women. The South Sudan Women Entrepreneurs Association was formed to empower women through entrepreneurship, capacity building, and networking. Many women have started small-scale businesses, from tailoring to craft enterprises, despite cultural and legal challenges.

More specifically, women in South Sudan are actively engaged in entrepreneurial self-help circles, fostering

economic independence and community resilience.

Recently, South Sudan launched a \$10 million Women Entrepreneurial Opportunity Facility, funded by the World Bank, to support 1,200 women-led businesses in Juba. This initiative provides financial aid, business training, and technical advisory services to help women overcome barriers like limited access to capital and networking opportunities.

The women's circles also provide emotional support to members of the groups. Our guest preacher on May 11, the Rev'd. Shirley Smith Graham, is a member of AFECS' Board of Directors. She discussed the women's efforts in her sermon.

The request is consistent with our mission statement God's work—our hands, voices, and hearts, committed to our community and the world. The donation is also consistent with our longstanding commitment to support women's self-help efforts. Finally, the donation reflects Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe's May 12 letter on Episcopal Migration Ministries.

Please join me in praying for the victims of the war in Sudan and displaced people around the world.

~ David Ewing



David Ewing

*“Please join
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*The Rev'd.
Theresa Lewallen*

Pentecost, pilgrimage, and Juneteenth

Here's what our Racial Justice and Healing Ministry is "up to," and how you can participate in three upcoming events

The Racial Justice and Healing Team invites you to participate in several events in June.



Canon Lee Hill

On Pentecost Sunday, June 8, be sure to attend the Forum for a presentation by The Rev'd. Canon Dr. J. Lee Hill, Jr., the Diocese of Virginia's Canon for Racial Justice and Healing. It's wonderful that the Rev'd. Dr. Hill can be with us on Pentecost. In addition to preaching and teaching, he will be able to answer any questions you may have about the Racial Justice and Healing Virginia Pilgrimage.



I hope some of you will join me for the [Racial Justice and Healing Virginia Pilgrimage](#). Registration is

in process. Scheduled for September 22-26, the first deposit is due by June 13. However, registration may close sooner based on the number of registrants. Information is available on the bulletin board in the parish hall and on the Diocesan [Web site](#).

Bring your chair, your umbrella, your hat, and water and join us on June 19, at Market Square in Old Town. The Washington Revels, in collaboration with the City's [Office of Historic Alexandria's Division of African American History](#), will present a Juneteenth program filled with storytelling, songs, and more.



Some of the Jubilee Voices, including Harold and Andrea Blackford, on the right

The program starts at **1:00 pm. with David Olawuyi Fakunle**, a dynamic storyteller who blends his African percussionist training with stories, songs, and movements to bring the African oral tradition to life.

The celebration will continue at **2:00 pm, with a new Jubilee Voices concert**

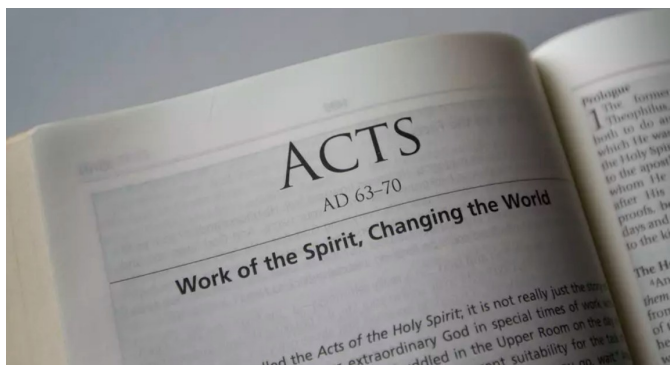
that focuses on how love—of family, faith, community, and country—helped sustain African Americans during in times of chaos and conflict. Enjoy songs, stories, spoken word, audience participation and more as Jubilee Voices, under the direction of Andrea Blackford “sing the journey!”

On Juneteenth, I invite you to begin your day with this prayer, used by Episcopal churches throughout the country:

Almighty God, you rescued your people from slavery in Egypt, and throughout the ages you have never failed to hear the cries of the captives. We remember before you our sisters and brothers in Galveston, Texas, who on this day received the glad tidings of their emancipation. Forgive the many grave sins that delayed that liberating word. Anoint us with your Spirit to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim the year of your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

*~ The Rev.'d
Theresa Lewallen*

Kat's musings on Rev'd. Shirley's sermon



What does the Book of Acts of the Apostles mean to modern worshippers? This book tells the stories of early believers in the Christ. If you hear a reading from this book during Sunday service, it tells you that we are probably in Easter season, because in the lectionary readings from the book of Acts almost always occur during Easter season.

On a recent Sunday, our visiting clergy the Rev'd. Shirley Smith Graham, reminded us that people find God because someone told His story. That was the early purpose of the book of Acts: helping people to see how early followers were living the life that Christ preached. Further, she posited, we become part of the story when we hear God's voice and create our own story of our connection with Him. She challenged us to become part of the story of how God's saving help and sustaining power live today.

One of Resurrection's strengths has always been a strong tradition of preaching, of connecting the words of Scripture to our

daily life. This was an important spiritual component of our redevelopment effort when time and again Rev'd. Jo was able to show us how scripture was guiding, supporting, and sustaining us during the years of this project.

I have come to expect this kind of connection with scripture when sermon time rolls around, and I am not surprised when our local preachers, whether clergy, seminarians, or laity, do this. But, I was gratified when the sermon from our visiting clergy Rev'd. Shirley was spot-on for Resurrection, even though it was her first visit to our church.

Sunday worship has two main components: Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Table. For a long time I regarded the Eucharist – Liturgy of the Table – as the most important component of the service because it reminds us of Christ's sacrifice and promise to us. We pray that the grace of Holy Communion will make us one body, one spirit in Christ so that we worthily

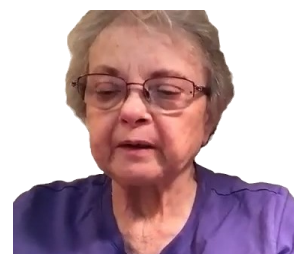
serve the world in his name.

But the service has always given equal power to the Liturgy of the Word through scripture reading, recitation of the creed, and prayers of the people. And, as I mentioned, the preaching that connects scripture to our daily life.

I'd like to suggest that service to God has a third component beyond the two that we participate in on Sunday mornings. We could call this the Liturgy of the Acts and this liturgy guides our lives between Sunday services. At Resurrection we call this liturgy Outreach and it has many expressions: Food Pantry, Diaper Ministry, Dawn Patrol, Hygiene Kits, Racial Justice and Healing, Tuna Drives, Little Free Library, and now Abundance Ministry (see separate article).

I believe that Resurrection can respond positively to Rev'd. Shirley's challenge to be the people of Acts. We tell our story in many ways throughout our community because we have heard God's voice and believe that our actions are how God chooses to be heard in today's world. Acts of the Apostles is not just a collection of centuries old stories about Christ's followers. It is a modern call to action about how to live our lives. Or as our Diocese would teach: Love Jesus. Embody Justice. Be Disciples.

~ Kat Turner



Kat Turner

NOTE: [Click here \(youtu.be/CGbNw855ksw\)](https://youtu.be/CGbNw855ksw) for a 8:15 minute animated overview of the Book of Acts.

Diocesan Creation Care retreat



*The people at the diocesan Creation Care retreat
(Judy is second from the right in the back row)*

Clergy & Staff

Rector

[The Rev. Jo J. Belser](#)

Deacon

[The Rev. Theresa Lewallen](#)

Pianist

Michael Lewallen

Bookkeeper

Holly Zarazinski

Consultant

Maryellen Tibbs

Parish

Administrator

Angie Armwood

Sexton

Beltway Cleaning, Inc.

The Diocese of Virginia's Creation Care Committee met on May 23- 24 at Rosslyn, the diocesan retreat and conference center in Richmond. The purpose of the meeting was to get organized and to develop a mission statement with the help of the Rev'd. Mark Wastler (head of Chesapeake Watershed Ministries), the Rev'd. Dina Van Klaveron (Canon for Stewardship and Development in the Diocese of Maryland), and Ms. Heidi Kim, who is the Interim Canon for Discipleship for the Diocese of Virginia. It was a very intense planning session for the 15 people who attended.

We established a mission statement to increase our interaction with members of the clergy and congregations and to share our knowledge of native gardening, the

importance of pollinators, and the future of our food supply. We also came up with several ideas for one-day events to educate people on the effects of climate

change and recommend important reading materials on the subject.

I had previously met many of the attendees at our Zoom meetings over the last few years, and it was such a pleasant experience meeting them in person and getting to know them over breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

I would also like to use what I learned in Rosslyn to get the Rev'd. Theresa Lewallen and the Racial Justice and Healing Committee involved in creation care, as there is a close relationship between the two groups. Many low-income people live on poorly developed land and are very much affected by climate change.

~ Judy Isaacs

*The Creation Care Committee
of the Diocese of Virginia
encourages, empowers, and educates
the people of the diocese to
reconnect Christian discipleship
and mission with the ecology
of nature.*

*The mission statement of the diocesan Creation
Care Committee, of which Judy is a member*

Abundance Ministry Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

From our May 18 Abundance Ministry Forum

What is the Abundance Ministry?

Our Vestry made the Abundance Ministry a major goal for Resurrection in 2025 when it authorized the expenditure over a three year period of \$500,000, about half of our accumulated wealth, to meet a core value of our congregation: helping other people.

Where did the money come from?

At the start of the redevelopment process, Resurrection held invested funds that primarily were the result of generous bequests over the years. A commitment was made not to budget these invested funds for the project in case there were unforeseen calls on our resources. As it turned out, we didn't have to use the investments, so they continued to grow to their present level of just over a million dollars.

What does the name Abundance Ministry mean?

Abundance recognizes that our wealth has come from God's blessings which leads to a natural desire to share those blessings with others with the understanding that such sharing imparts spiritual abundance to ourselves.

Who decides how the allocated funds will be spent?

The Abundance Ministry Committee of Courtenay

Brickerhoff, David Ewing, John Kirk, Gbehlee Savice, and Kat Turner receives and researches suggestions and then makes recommendations to the Vestry, which has final approval for all awards.

What kind of projects will be funded?

This year the Abundance Ministry is following the categories that the congregation discerned for its 60th Anniversary Giving: education, financial assistance and feeding people. A fourth category has been added for innovation and new ideas.

What commitments have we made so far?

- West End Lazarus Ministry: \$16,000
- Scholarship Fund of Alexandria: \$20,000
- West End Food Pantry: \$36,000

Why is our Food Pantry one of the recipients?

With increased use of the food pantry, fewer items available from the Capital Area Food Bank, and higher costs, our Food Pantry Team was finding it increasingly difficult to maintain its level of operations. It was decided to provide a stable source of funding at the required level as a priority ministry of Resurrection so that the Food Pantry could continue to serve its neighbors.

What else is in the pipeline for potential funding this year?

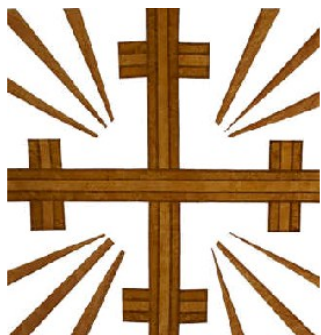
Rev'd. Jo and members of the Abundance Ministry have been working with Affordable Homes and Communities (our old redevelopment friends, AHC, Inc.) and the management of The Spire to craft a rent assistance program that would provide \$250 monthly rent relief for the ten tenants at The Spire who are most rent burdened. If everything works out and the Vestry approves, this program will begin on August 1 at an annual cost of \$30,000 for the first year. Look for the details in next month's issue.

Also, there have been discussions with Resident Services at The Spire about a program that would assist residents interested in becoming U.S. citizens. The program would provide tutoring to prepare for the exam and underwrite the \$750 cost of the exam.

What else might the Abundance Ministry fund?

There was interest among the congregation in health care, alleviating medical debt, and helping immigrants, but The Abundance Ministry relies on the congregation to identify worthy purposes and organizations that are aligned with our desire to help our neighbors.

(Continued on page 8)



Church of the Resurrection

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Alexandria 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'd. Jo Belser
- David Ewing
- Lea Fowlie, editor
- Lenore Funkhouser, photos
- Judy Isaacs
- The Rev'd. Theresa Lewallen
- Lori Thurgood
- Kat Turner

Church of the Resurrection serves the people in the Beauregard Corridor of the City of Alexandria, home to many recent immigrants. In April 2021, Resurrection completed an eight-year mission to provide 113 units of affordable housing to its community.

Abundance Ministry Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

(Continued from page 7)

How is the Abundance Ministry different from other Resurrection outreach programs?

Besides the obvious difference of the funding levels, this Ministry recognizes that the congregation does not have the resources (people, expertise, time, operational systems) to undertake substantial new efforts to help our neighbors. The Abundance Ministry will work with trusted partners who are already engaged in the areas we want to support and who have the expertise and the infrastructure to use these new resources wisely.

For example, rather than starting a scholarship

program of its own, soliciting applications, selecting recipients, and disbursing funds to individual schools, Resurrection can contribute to the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria which has a system and process in place to serve the students of our community. The contribution from our Abundance Ministry allows SFA to fund additional worthy students. Last year more than \$1,000,000 was given to graduates of our city high school.

How do organizations find out about Abundance Ministry financing?

The Vestry has decided that we will not solicit applications by contacting organizations that might be

considered trusted partners or accept applications from organizations desiring funding. Instead, we rely on YOU, the congregation, to bring to our attention worthy purposes and organizations that you think deserve support from Resurrection. This could include local, national, and even international organizations. Ask me or one of the other members of the Abundance Ministry for a form to use to bring your cause to the attention of the Abundance Ministry.

~ Kat Turner



Bring tuna

We will be blessing tuna on Pentecost Sunday, June 8. Can you bring a few more cans?