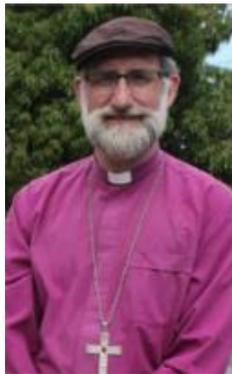


**A Special Sunday at Our Saviour**

This past Sunday was truly a special day in our small parish! If one was not prepared for the events of the day in advance, as one entered the Narthex, it was clear that there was an extra bit of energy to be experienced. First, the congregation had worked very hard on preparing the building for the exceptional day, cleaning and polishing to a luster. The table was ready to be set for festivities and fellowship, and it was hard to miss the tall, bearded guest conferring with our Pastor.



The visit by **Bishop Mark Van Koevering** was a much-anticipated event that held great meaning for our parish. Not only was the service conducted by the Bishop, but as a congregation, we welcomed **Beth Thompson** as a member of our Church. This welcoming service was also presided over by the Bishop, and our heart-felt reception of a new member was enhanced by the presence of her family. We truly welcome her among our ranks.

The Bishop spoke about discipleship during his homily, and the hard lessons that we have learned from following Christ. He said that we are wonderfully made, but fatally flawed as humans, since we cannot save ourselves. Though many in this generation seek to be free, the only real freedom comes from God's saving grace, and through our response to His invitation of pure Grace.

Following the service, there was a fabulous fellowship, with excellent food and even more excellent conversations with friends. After this time of sharing, we adjourned to the Sanctuary for a meeting with the Bishop to discuss possible plans and changes occurring at the diocesan offices. Bishop Van Koevering indicated that due to Covid, the diocesan convention on Saturday, October 30 will be virtual again this year. This is helpful in some ways as it saves a good deal of time travelling for the participants; but the comradery will be greatly missed. There will be additional break-out sessions which will include bible study and a session called "From Lament to Hope." He encouraged the congregation to sign up for the diocesan newsletter to learn more about the governance bodies of the community. You can sign up at this link: <https://diolink.org/diolex/index.php/news/>

He said that there is a pending sale of Mission House and that if this sale is finalized it will save the diocese approximately \$80,000 per year. The diocesan staff would then operate from rental space. He is committed to lessening the cost of the institutional and organizational footprint of the church. He wants to emphasize investing in church members and their work in the community. He is also committed to an equitable sharing of resources among large and small congregations in paying the diocesan annual assessment that provides the operating funds for the diocesan staff.

He announced that two administrative positions are being eliminated and members of the diocesan staff are being reassigned to roles that are more oriented to mission and growth in the church, especially in the Appalachian area. He spoke of task forces that are being created to better serve these areas.

After the Bishop's talk, the floor was opened to questions from the congregation. The discussion included the church's stance on climate change, our parish offering public talks on Science and Faith, and a proposal being discussed in our parish for environmentally-friendly burials, and building partnerships in the community. Multiple ideas were presented and discussed, and the room was filled with stimulating thought and possibilities. At one point, the Bishop removed his jacket, possible because of the heat of the day, or was it the vigor of the conversation? At any rate, the visit was enjoyable,

thought-provoking, informative as well as reassuring. Bishop Van Koevering is indeed a comforting and provocative presence, and always a welcomed guest in our community. **Linda Myers**

#### **From the Garden**



Well, October is here and frost will arrive soon, along with the Great Pumpkin - for all of you Charlie Brown fans! We are still harvesting pole beans, cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, kale and collards. There are still winter squash, pumpkins and sweet potatoes yet to be harvested. But things are slowing down and cleanup starts soon.

This has been another busy and successful season. We are thankful for God's abundance and for the ability to share our produce. Thank you for your support and love! God is good! **Janie Jordan**

#### **Sunday Church Fellowship**

Your help is needed in volunteering to bring some snacks or light refreshments for our Fellowship time on Sunday after our worship service. The church provides coffee, so you would just need to bring some healthy snacks or light refreshments. There is a calendar on the table in the narthex next to the kitchen where you can sign up. Thank you!

#### **Let's Keep On Krogering**

Kroger gives back to non-profit organizations 4% of the money spent by each person shopping at Kroger. We have 21 households in our parish participating in this program. From May 28 to August 26, our church received **\$81.78**. **This is such a simple, easy way to support our church financially.** To sign up and all you need is your Kroger card number and our church organization number which is **VP655**. You can sign up online at <https://www.communityservicesproject.org/kroger/>. Anyone can sign-up to support our church; you don't have to be a member of our church.



#### **Our Voice in Washington: (Part 3: Now it's our Turn)**

In our recent meeting with Bishop Mark, he reminded us that we are part of the larger church and he mentioned some of the good works being done in our parish and throughout the diocese. The Church's Washington Office of Government Relations (OGR) agrees: "We recognize and celebrate all the ways Episcopalians live out their commitments to love their neighbor." However, the OGR strongly urges us to consider going even further:

"For those of you who are already engaged in social justice work, we ask you to include advocacy as one component of that. If you protest, also write a letter to your member of Congress. If you give money to a good cause, also make a phone call to your state representative asking him or her to address the issue. If you volunteer your time, also attend a town hall with a public official and ask a question. For some, advocacy may feel uncomfortable, or not as rewarding as joining with others in a march for your values. But advocacy is one key aspect to making systemic change and a critical part of our public witness as Christians."



So, you want to be part of what the OGR calls the “ministry of public policy advocacy” but you don’t know where to start? The OGR has provided a wealth of helpful advocacy resources, starting with an Advocacy Resource page that includes an online handbook, *Faith and Citizenship: A Guide to Effective Advocacy for Episcopalians*. Its goal is to help us “gain a better understanding of how to build relationships with government officials and how to make calls for justice more concrete by pushing for particular policies or laws.” Lest you glance through it and feel overwhelmed, note that the Guide ranks types of advocacies on a scale of 1-5 (indicated by little red and blue top hats) based on how time-consuming or complicated they are so you can pick your level of involvement. Some examples include writing, calling, or visiting elected officials (with tips for how to do these effectively), or writing letters to the editor or op-eds.

On the Advocacy Resources page, you can also learn about an interesting activity for parishes: “The Postcard Project: Engaging in *Slow* Advocacy.” This is conceived as a way to focus on “long-term, big-picture strategy and relationship building with government officials.” Intended as a group activity to encourage discussion among parishioners on issues of importance, it can be done virtually or in person. Detailed instructions and suggestions are provided including ways to involve people with artistic talents, other churches, or even children.

The OGR site also directs you to several outside advocacy resources including a link to a report on “Citizen-Centric Advocacy: The Untapped Power of Constituent Engagement,” by the Congressional Management Foundation. This discusses what research reveals about the potential power of citizen lobbyists (i.e. advocates) in influencing their elected representatives.

When you visit the OGR web site, you might be overwhelmed by the wealth of information not only about how to advocate but also about what to advocate for or against. My suggestion is to start by picking one of the policy areas that you particularly care about and educating yourself on the Church’s position, pending legislation in Congress, etc. Then think about how much time and effort you can put into advocating. The current broad policy priorities of the Episcopal Church are creation care; racial reconciliation; ending poverty; migration, refugees, and immigration; human rights and peace-building. The OGR’s advocacy positions and recommendations for advocacy by parishioners are based on Biblical and theological teachings and resolutions by the Church’s General Convention and Executive Council. To learn what specific legislation the Church is supporting or opposing, the OGR provides an Action Alerts page that informs you on the issue involved, pending legislation, and the Church’s position, and even provides a space and some suggested language to help you to compose and send a message to your legislators. To keep in touch with specific OGR advocacy initiatives and how you can participate, you can join the Episcopal Public Policy Network (EPPN) to receive action alerts and related information via e-mail.

Finally, if all this sounds too “political” or maybe even partisan for your tastes, the OGR invites you to participate in its “Election Activators” program in which you make a year-long commitment to “promote and facilitate local, non-partisan voter engagement efforts.” So, there is something for everybody, many ways to get involved and important issues to choose from—all within the mission of the Episcopal Church.

**Sources:**

Office of Government Relations <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/office-government-relations/>

Advocacy Resources <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/office-government-relations/advocacy-resources/>

“Faith and Citizenship: A Guide to Effective Advocacy for Episcopalians”

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/02/OGR-Faith-and-Citizenship.pdf>

“Action Alerts” <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/office-government-relations/action-alerts/>  
“The Postcard Project” <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/02/OGR-Episcopal-Postcard-Project.pdf>

Episcopal Public Policy Network <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/office-government-relations/eppn-sign-up/>

Election Activator Program [https://www.episcopalchurch.org/publicaffairs/episcopal-church-launches-election-activator-program/?mc\\_cid=1a54c45514&mc\\_eid=52660c5517](https://www.episcopalchurch.org/publicaffairs/episcopal-church-launches-election-activator-program/?mc_cid=1a54c45514&mc_eid=52660c5517)  
<https://www.congressfoundation.org/projects/communicating-with-congress/citizen-centric-advocacy-2017>

**Jane Rainey**



**Birthdays**

Ellen Suters	10/22
Jane Rainey	10/23
Angie Perriello	10/25
Carrie Kline	10/28
Donald Short	11/9
Catherine Woodruff-Tait	11/11
Shirley Bennett	11/30
<b>Anniversary:</b> Leslie and Jim Farris	10/23

**Parish Calendar**

Wednesday, October 20: Vestry Meeting, 7:00 PM (in person and virtually)

Saturday, October 30: Diocesan Annual Convention held virtually

Sunday, October 31: All Hollows Eve

Monday, November 1: All Saints’ Day

Sunday, November 7: All Saint’s Sunday



**Ancient Joke of the Week: Different points of View**

Three people were visiting and viewing the Grand Canyon, an artist, a pastor, and a cowboy. As they stood on the edge of the massive abyss, each one responded with a cry of exclamation. The artist said “Ah, what a beautiful scene to paint!” The minister cried “What a wonderful example of the handiwork of God!” The cowboy mused “What a terrible place to lose a cow!”

If you would like to submit an article, please contact our newsletter editor **Linda Myers**.