

THE BRANCH

TELLING THE STORIES OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
EARLY PENTECOST 2016



Our Story

daily growing more in love
with God & each other

~

daily growing more in
awareness and willingness to
serve God & each other

~

daily growing into the
likeness of Christ, compelled
to see the world reconciled
to God

~

daily growing through
worship, internal formation,
external formation, action,
evangelism, & stewardship,
collectively known as the
way of st. b's





Staff

Clergy:

The Rev. Dr. Jerry Smith, *Rector*
The Rev. Travis Hines, *Associate Rector*
The Rev. David Wilson, *Pastoral Assistant*
The Rev. Dr. Stu Phillips, *Liturgical Assistant*

Office:

Leslie Tomlinson, *Executive Assistant to the Rector*
Teresa Robinson, *Financial and Music Administrator*

Parish Ministry:

Carla Schober, *Director for Family & Children's Formation*
David Madeira, *Director of Music*
Steven Lefebvre, *Director of Youth & Young Adult Formation*
Sally Chambers, *Director of Communications*
Bev Mahan, *Verger & Assistant to the Rector for Liturgy*
Robert Smith, *Assistant to the Rector for Pastoral Care*
Julia McGirt, *Organist*
Josh Martin, *Children's Formation Assistant*
Gaylene Latham, *Nursery Coordinator*

St. B's Bookstore:

Allison Hardwick, *Manager*

Preschool & Mother's Day Out:

Kelly Hull, *Preschool Director*

Vestry

Molly Dillingham, Gregg Allen, Jim Russell, Chris Prichard, Mimi Heldman, Ty Sparks, Shannon Truss, Eddie Latimer, Jim Chaffee, Early Ruley

Melissa Ward, *Clerk*
Alfred Dowell, *Treasurer*
Seth Swihart, *Senior Warden*
Kristin Chapman, *Junior Warden*

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Huge shout out to former St. Beezer Rufus Howe for the cover photo taken of the Smiths in Turkey on a St. B's pilgrimage.



I Am Doing A New Thing

Last Words from Fr. Jerry

“Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?”

God asked through the prophet Isaiah (43:19).

God was getting ready to restore the nation of Israel and promised to protect them in the promised land.

He was assuring them that, although the future seemed uncertain, He was on the throne and was about to prove to them that He held their tomorrows no matter what the present circumstances caused them to believe.

This is the last article that I will write for the Branch. This month has been filled with “lasts”!

The decision to move was not an easy one for Marjie and me, but it is a decision that both of us believe will be best for all involved, even though inconvenient.

For over 11 years we have had the privilege of leading the community in what we believe has been the Way of Jesus. We built on the foundation of those who have been in leadership here before us. And we believe that the persons who come after us will continue to help with the ongoing story of the unfolding of the Kingdom of God.

Leadership styles differ, but I for one trust the discernment process the church has established and am confident that God will continue what He has begun here.

God is on the throne, and in spite of our propensity to doubt this, He will have His way here!

In 1973, during the middle of the neo-Pentecostal revival that was taking place in the Episcopal church, a word

of prophecy was given to the people of this parish. Many of the things have been realized in this parish and I believe the seventh and last is on the horizon.

The prophecy announced

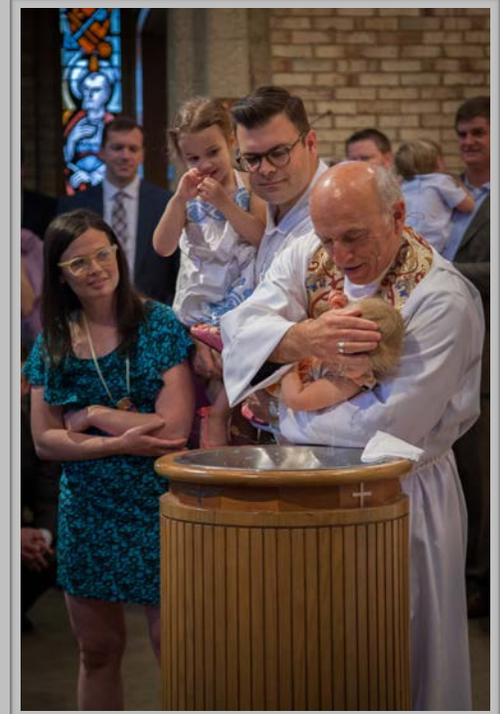
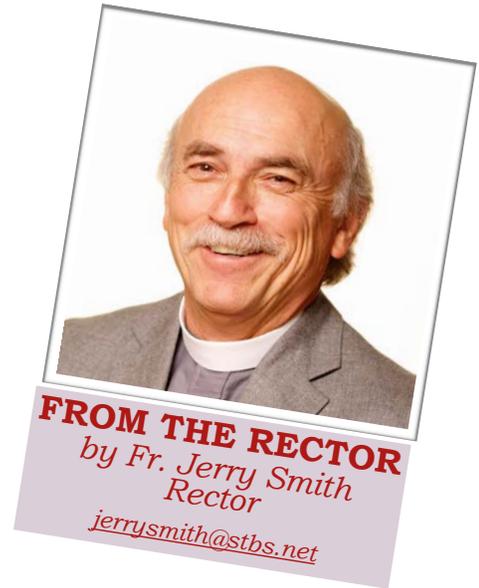
“Sudden central physical growth, expansion, and inclusion will take place. Pilgrims will come to witness and to be taught. People will gather in family or community or household like worship services which will enhance and call forth individual charism and gifts which will be shared and exchanged with the whole body when the whole body gathers to worship and praise God. We will grow closer to God and to each other daily increasing until we realize our part in the whole Kingdom of God.”

I don't want to be overdramatic or super spiritual, but I do believe that God has always had a plan for this community, and although there have been times when our focus has been misdirected, now is the time to recognize the hand of God at work in some profoundly new and wonderful ways.

The past 11 and a half years have been a challenging yet wonderful experience for Marjie and me, but now God wants to take the parish to the next level of knowing His Grace and Mercy as well as the next level of partnership with Him. Your next rector will be called upon to guide you to this place.

St. B's will continue to enhance the Kingdom of God, and I expect to hear great things from this corner of God's vineyard, in years to come.

May Jesus continue to reign here, and may y'all know with confidence, His great love for you.



Fr. Jerry baptizing Daily Shay, May 8. Daily was one of 11 baptisms that Sunday.



Parents, Children, & Worship

a n i n v i t a t i o n f o r s u m m e r

NOTICE: This Summer we will **not** be providing formation for children five years and older during the services!

Are you reading this with trepidation? Do you have a picture in your mind of squirmy children and sulky adolescents? Do you wonder how it will be possible to keep focused on the liturgy and sermon and not go away frustrated and tired? Well, you're not alone. Parent or not, children in service can be distracting and infringe on our worship experience. It would certainly be easier to give up, stay home, and have church on the porch.

But I think giving up would be missing the point of what Sunday worship is all about. Worship is not about ourselves. It is our surrender to an almighty God that loves children and adults alike. It is the challenge of community. It is sitting next to one another to hear God's voice, no matter our differences, our age, our fussiness, and without judgment. It is



THE WONDER OF IT ALL

by *Carla Schober*

Director of Family &
Children Formation
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an honor and testament to the Sacrament of the Baptismal covenant as we partner together. And this summer, we have a wonderful opportunity to live it out.

This "opportunity" does not mean that our St. B's Children's Formation is

taking a hiatus, or taking our role of partnership lightly. We are already busy with plans to provide parents and non-parents with family friendly tools to help each other on Sunday mornings. There will be worship bulletins for children that will compliment the liturgy, and provide some surprises that even the adults might find interesting or useful. There will be suggestions on how to navigate The Peace in new ways. Between services there will be games and activities to help us all get to know one another. And yes, there will still be Nursery and classes for our toddlers.

Please join me this summer in anticipation of our growing church family getting to know and appreciate one another even better. If you're new to St. B's, or new to the idea of children being a part of the worship service, please feel free to contact us. Our children's formation staff and I are honored to walk alongside you on this journey.

Training children to worship can attract parents as well as children to pay attention to what God is doing. Parenting in the pew helps you pay attention to the most important thing you can ever train your child to do: worship. Worship is the only thing we get to do forever.

Parenting in the Pew
Robbie Castleman



The children's ministry staff. St. B's is thankful!



Of Pentecost and Of Transitions

Being Open to the Spirit

It was a day I knew was coming, and when the announcement was made, I wasn't surprised. Sad? Yes. But also anxious about what would happen to my church. Would my friends leave? Would our numbers dwindle? What about my spiritual growth, would it be suspended? How could this community that means so much to me stay the same? It was the early 1970s, and our beloved rector was leaving my home church in Florida. He was like a big brother to me, and my faith grew exponentially under his ministry.

It happened again in the early 1980s. Chuck Murphy was like a father to me, and I encountered the Holy Spirit through his teaching and example. Though I knew it was irrational and unfair, I felt a bit abandoned. I questioned why this was happening to me again. Now Jerry is leaving. He and Marjie are friends, and Jerry led me into the verger ministry, which I love. And there have been lots of other leadership changes along the way. (Did



Lindsay Mahan Lee was baptized in 1984 by Fr. Ron Jackson at St. B's.

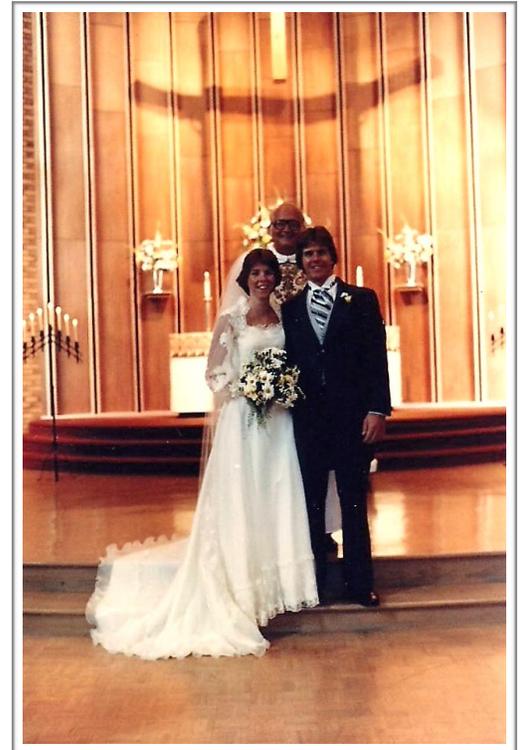
you know that the average tenure of priests in a church in the US is five years?)

Perhaps out of laziness, I never looked for a new church when mine was in transition. In the midst of the changes in leadership and the uncertainty that goes with it, I found comfort in the constancy and predictability of the liturgy. The liturgy produces a rhythm of sameness that anchors me in times of change. It directs my attention to the community and to our Lord and Savior. When we say the Nicene Creed, we say, "We believe," not "I believe." When we confess our sins, we say, "We confess that we have sinned against you." We recall the words of Jesus at the Last Supper; "Drink this, all of you." The liturgy forces me to realize that what is happening in my church isn't about me.

In the liturgy of Pentecost, of course, we celebrate God's gift of the Holy Spirit. We recall our baptism, when we were "sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked as Christ's own forever." We

remember our confirmation, when the bishop laid hands on our heads and prayed, "Strengthen your servant with your Holy Spirit." The altar lines and vestments are red, symbolizing the tongues of fire of the Holy Spirit. The collect and readings recall the coming of the Holy Spirit to the first Christians. The lyrics of the songs chosen celebrate this gift. On Pentecost, we are reminded that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit isn't just a story about something that happened to others in ancient times. Pentecost is about us.

As we go about doing the work of the people during this time of transition, may we be open to and led by the Holy Spirit.



Bev and Tom Mahan were married by Fr. Chuck Murphy at St. B's in 1982.



WALK THIS WAY
by Bev Mahan

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What Happens Next at St. B's?

The Latest on Calling a New Rector



Today we celebrate the work of God through Fr. Jerry and Marjie over the last 11 years at St. B's. But what happens tomorrow when the Smiths begin to pack their house and prepare to move to Tallahassee?

- First, Fr. Jerry technically is still employed as Rector of St. Bartholomew's until May 31, even though today is his last Sunday. Fr. Jerry is taking the last two weeks of May as vacation time.
- On Sunday, May 22, Canon Pamela Snare from the Diocese will hold an informational meeting that morning for the congregation. She will answer your questions about the process for calling a new rector.
- As soon as possible, Canon Snare will present interim candidates to the vestry; and the vestry will select who will fill the position until a permanent rector is found. We are unsure how long this will take, but we can trust that Canon Snare will work as quickly as possible.
- After the interim is in place, the vestry will select members of the congregation to serve on the search committee for a new rector. The process for determining who is on the committee has not yet been determined, and we will consult with Canon Snare on the best way to move forward.

- Through all of this, we need to realize that, though the process will be slow and sometimes frustrating, it is a time for us to reflect on who we are and who we'd like to become. This is a time for all of us to lean in rather than pull away from the church community. We encourage you in this transitional season to be intentional about making time to be the family we have become in the last decade.
- Already, Kristin and I have been very encouraged by how the vestry, staff, and congregation have approached this change in such a positive way and we are confident that this will be the theme throughout the entire process.



WARDEN'S CORNER

by Seth Swihart & Kristin Chapman

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Sunday, May 22 Between Services In the Gym

The Vestry & Wardens invite you to meet with Canon Snare from the Diocese. Come and hear about the process we are about to begin to call a new rector. Come and ask your questions.



Reminders of Smallness

REMINDERS OF SMALLNESS

DO NOT BE OVERWHELMED TO DOUBT WHEN CONTEMPLATING THE VASTNESS OF THE UNIVERSE FOR IF, AS IT HAS BEEN SAID, ALL CREATION SUDDENLY BURST FORTH IN A FLASH OF LIGHT BECAUSE OF AN OVERFLOWING LOVE THAT COULD NOT ANY LONGER BE CONTAINED WHY SHOULD WE BE SURPRISED THAT SUCH A FIERY LOVE WOULD NOT STOP CREATING, EXPANDING A UNIVERSE—MAYBE EVEN A MULTIVERSE— THE VASTNESS OF WHICH DEFIES HUMAN COMPREHENSION?

TAKE HEART, THEN, BY THE HUGENESS OF THE COSMOS
LET IT BE A REMINDER OF THE GREAT IMMENSITY
OF THAT LOVE THAT CREATES AND SUSTAINS
TINY THINGS: YOU, ME, EVERYONE.
SUSPENDED IN A SUNBEAM
ON THIS PALE BLUE DOT

AND THEN, LOOK UP
THANK THAT LOVE
FOR REMINDERS
OF SMALLNESS
FOR IT IS ALSO
SAID THAT
BLESSED
ARE THE
MEEK



HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING

by David Madeira

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GO DEEPER WITH THE Psalms

Stay tuned for dates and details regarding an upcoming class on the Psalms taught by St. B's Director of Music, David Madeira. Topics will include the theology of the Psalms and ways the Psalter influences and shapes our individual and corporate worship. This class will also be a workshop for Psalm-singing! We will examine various ways the Psalms have been sung through the ages, practicing and discussing them along the way. The class will culminate in the introduction of a new form of congregational psalm chant developed for trial use at St. B's. All are encouraged to attend. No singing experience necessary! More details to come.

CHURCH HAPPENS WHEN
WE GATHER TO TELL THE
STORIES TO EACH OTHER
STANLEY HAUERWAS

Reflections on Holy Week at St. B's.



From top to bottom: the Procession of the Palms on Palm Sunday, the foot washing on Maundy Thursday, and Stations of the Cross on Good Friday.

#With *by Kaci Allen, St. B's*

Six months ago, if you said I would wake up Easter morning in a tent at church, I would've laughed. Yet that's what happened. Growing up in a different Christian church, "Holy Week" brought images of Jerusalem and observances "over there," not Nashville. My first "Holy Week" at St. B's was transformational and witnessing it through the eyes of my ten-year-old son was captivating. My journey began when I joined the *With* book study. The safe space Father Jerry created, with our incredible small group, drew me in and I wanted to know more.

I would be remiss to forego mentioning the 'Rite of Reconciliation,' a key experience to my heart and mind being fully present to engage the following weeks. After reassurance it wasn't reserved for members or something I might "mess up" I came and knelt before Father Jerry. As a therapist, I welcome emotions, however, vulnerability and tears are not historically parts of me that felt safe in church. As he explained the process, I began weeping. We hadn't started and I could barely see the pages through my tears as he reached up and patted my arm with the calming presence many of us know. Kneeling before this priest I barely knew, we journeyed through the passages, and I poured out my heart ways I had been deeply wounded, my anger toward God, and how I had caused harm to others and myself. He answered with an intimate model of understanding grace I never knew existed. For me, grace was often painful, but this didn't hurt. His words penetrated my heart and I left exhausted and free! I could breathe.

Palm Sunday, Ethan and I joined the story together. After waving branches, celebrating the coming of Jesus, Fr. Jerry challenged us to "live the liturgy," building roads into our lives so Christ might come in. This was not a passive week focused on outfits or Easter baskets, but was time to focus on what this week meant in our life like never before; a personal week of work, walking *with* Christ through His death. It had begun.

Having observed foot washings from a distance, I anxiously awaited the **Maundy Thursday** service. Yearning to experience being fully *with* God, I was open to all aspects. As we walked forward, Father Travis's words soothed my mind. He reminded us, "God is revealed in Jesus, in the places of death and dirt," inviting us to consider our own pain and shame, asking God to reveal what's next in receiving His washing and grace. When my turn came, a young girl, between ages 7-10 knelt before me, washing my feet with such great care. She dried them slowly then hugged me. When I turned to kneel, another girl about the same age sat before me. I can't explain what rushed over me. As I washed her feet, time stood still. I prayed for her life, safety, and every step and experience this precious one would travel. It was no coincidence that as I opened my heart for God to wash my ache, I was both served by and serving, two girls about the age church began getting painful for me. My son, close in age, sat a few chairs away having his own powerful experience.

At the **Stations of the Cross**, Ethan volunteered to walk *with* his teacher and mentor, Pastor Sullivan, to carry the cross. The magnitude of what Mary must've felt watching her son was overwhelming. As we nailed his cloth, I wondered how often my actions and words lead him to partner in the crucifixion rather than toward peace and love. Ethan imagined it was the actual cross and as he felt the weight of the world in his hands was amazed Jesus did this for him. We left in silence.

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Candlelight, music and scripture filled the **Holy Saturday Easter Vigil**, as the resurrection story continued. When families surrounded the baptismal font, Ethan whispered that he knew it would work for the baby, but wasn't convinced the bigger kids would fit! I laughed, simultaneously soaking in the wonder in his eyes having known only baptism by immersion. The invitation to receive a blessing was extended and as Fr. Jerry laid hands on him praying, Ethan was shocked by the specificity of his words. He thought Fr. Jerry kept his eyes closed and had a "Yoda moment," sensing it was him. We agreed that would be less Yoda, more the Holy Spirit and that he saw him.

Part of being 'all-in' was camping out, so after the formal vigil, we walked to our tent where two new friends started a warm fire. It burned through the night as we imagined the disciples' experience that first Saturday. Would Jesus *actually* return, or was He speaking figuratively? Was it three, or four days? What if we were wrong and had given up everything to follow Him? What if we were right and He was coming back after we denied knowing Him? We have the benefit of knowing, "the rest of the story," they didn't. Wanting to believe, but having not yet seen the promise fulfilled, all they could do was wait. Our night was full of discussion and wonder, as we drifted to sleep, holding hands, waiting. Hours later, with no makeup, fancy dress or tie, we walked a few

hundred feet to the sunrise service, the most beautiful Easter memory we have shared.

Ethan says St. B's does things "on purpose," and I echo gratitude for intentionality in each service. Experiences are often taken for granted when we've grown up with them and it's easy to lose excitement and focus. This Holy Week, we laughed, cried, questioned and were given permission to explore the St. B's community with curiosity, specifically what Christ had for us. It wasn't a casual experience as we stepped off the sidelines into the midst of the story as it unfolded then and what it means for us, today, to walk together, purposefully, **with** Him.



Kaci and her son whispering during the Easter Vigil.

The Realm of God is outside time,
No past, no future, endless now,
The One-in-Three, infinite truth,
Compelling time to end in love.

The Realm of God is outside time
In glory bright and endless light.
Yet even he-who-must-destroy
Was made by God to work His will.

I'm here in time with sting of pain,
Trying to live my life in time.
Trying to live in God's pure realm,
His suffering taken as my own.

May I accept destruction pure
By God ordained to make me whole.
May I disclaim destruction false
And wield the Sword in God's pure
Word.

The Realm of God is outside time,
No past, no future, endless now,
May I partake of His great love,
As one with God to seize His will.

-Bonnie Bashor

Building Bridges

St. B's Partners with the Mennens

by David Mennen for St. B's Mission & Outreach Committee

"When in China I did not believe in God but I feel he brought me to America so He could reveal Himself to me...I am now a Christian". Jing is among the growing number of Chinese students who came to the United States to pursue the Chinese dream. She graduates next month from the University of North Carolina. Jing will return home with a diploma - and a transformed life.

As staff members with Bridges International (Cru), Dana and I are committed to reaching Chinese students like Jing. We have served for many years at Vanderbilt University, but today, our ministry extends across the United States. As national directors of the Chinese Network with Bridges International, we are able to mobilize people in ministry to Chinese students. With a team of diverse staff members, our Chinese Network offers cross-cultural training. We provide tools and resources. We conduct events and venues for Chinese students, and we connect with other ministry workers in collaborative networks.

Today there are over 300,000 Chinese students and scholars in the U.S, many of whom represent China's best and brightest. Yet, many were raised under the academic influence of evolutionism, and of course, atheism. As a result, most lack religious and/or philosophical beliefs to provide answers to life's ultimate questions. Often they think Christianity is unscientific. They likely believe Christianity is only a Western religion. Many have family members who are opposed to Christianity.

Soon after Jing arrived in the U.S. an American friend, Nancy, welcomed her. Nancy invited Jing into her world by going camping and watching football games. Jing invited Nancy into her world by eating Chinese dumplings and watching Chinese dramas - with English subtitles. Jing began to feel home away from home. Jing trusted Nancy and opened her heart. She explained how she struggled to fit into American campus culture. She shared the pressure from her parents' expectations to succeed.

Jing began to accept Nancy's invitations to attend church and Bible study. She engaged in spiritual discussions. Yet Jing often did not understand basic spiritual terms such as "baptism", "New Testament", and "saved". During the winter break, Jing joined Nancy with other international students at a Bridges International conference. As part of the Chinese Track, which Dana and I led, she experienced the Gospel in her heart language. She heard testimonies from other Chinese believers. And on the last day Jing placed her faith in Christ!

Dana and I are grateful to be part of the journey of students like Jing, and friends like Nancy! We appreciate St. B's faithful partnership in ministry.



David and Dana Mennen



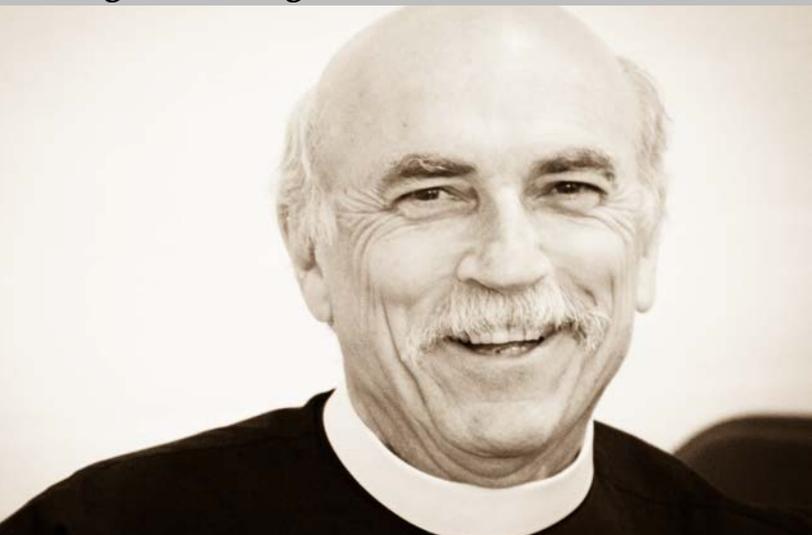
Below: David at work with Chinese students.



Farewell to the Smiths

Thanks for Making us Family

by Whitney Stone



I moved to Nashville on my own in December of 2005 knowing only a handful of acquaintances, but no close friends. It was a leap of faith, so to speak. That faith took me to several churches around Nashville, some with longer stays than others, before I landed at St. B's at the suggestion of an old friend. When I walked through the doors of St. B's on Maundy Thursday in 2006, I knew I was home. I knew no one, yet somehow deep down I knew I would find my local family in this place. I'd like to think God had something to do with it.

As I started to dip my toe in bit by bit, I began to feel and know deep in my soul what makes this place different. We are called to authenticity. We are called to walk alongside each other through the good and the bad. I'm not allowed to get by with "I'm fine" when asked, "How are you?" if the asker can see in my eyes that I am not. Being vulnerable is a way of life and path to healing here. We are a community of believers living as a family.

I don't know about you, but I have truly struggled with the news that Jerry and Marjie will be leaving us. I've only been at St. B's for ten years, which may be a short period of time compared to some people who have been with us from the beginning. I did not experience the "Chuck Murphy heyday" that I hear spoken of with legendary fondness. I did not walk through some of the painful times of this church over a decade ago. I arrived shortly after Jerry and Marjie arrived. So, to me, Jerry and Marjie are St. B's.

I now believe that the welcome I felt when I first arrived in 2006 was an extension of the hospitality and commitment to community lived out so well by the Smiths. I was at their house several times early on in my life at St. B's for young

adult gatherings (even though I was pushing that "young adult" age boundary) organized by their son Aaron, who was living here at the time. Having grown up Catholic, it was a new thing to have a couple leading the ministry of the church. And, make no mistake—Marjie serves just as essential a part of the ministry of the Smiths as Jerry. They come as a pair and do equal parts in the ministry of the church. There have been many times that Marjie has mentored, prayed with, encouraged, spoken God's truth, and listened with a discerning ear to me and my friends. I know there are young couples out there that will testify to the impact Jerry and Marjie have made on their fledgling marriages. The call to ministry shows clearly in both, not just Jerry.

Continued on pg. 14



The Smiths with a supper club in 2008.



A Profile in Courage

by Whitney Stone

A goodbye to the Smiths would not be complete without marking the distinct gifts that Marjie has offered to our church. A call to ministry is not only to the ordained, but also to the spouse of the ordained. Marjie has time and again shown how she answers this call with remarkable courage, sense of adventure, and willingness to step into the unknown.

I turned to Marjie's storytelling (which is often told through her photos) in old articles of the *Branch* to get a better idea of the Smiths' ministry history (and avoid asking them directly). I read many accounts of Marjie's commitment to ministry in the partnership with Jerry. Their collective mission together began after a month of dating in college when Jerry proposed, and Marjie said yes. Listening for God's voice and praying for direction with each opportunity that has come their way are constant refrains in their lives of over forty years of marriage and ministry together.

Their partnership took them to communities all over central and northern Ontario, with three kids in tow; to Beaver, Pennsylvania; Nashville, Tennessee; and soon to be Tallahassee, Florida. I wonder if Marjie knew what she was signing up for when she agreed to that marriage proposal after a few short weeks. Along the way, she was building a respected career in journalism and communications. She is a talented writer and editor, as many of us know. These talents were honed at daily and weekly newspapers, regional publications throughout Ontario, and nationally in her syndicated Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio pieces. When they moved to North Bay, Ontario, which had been their longest home base prior to St. B's,

Marjie was the Communications Director at Nippissing University. She held the same position for the Diocese of Pittsburgh when Jerry took a position at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania.

When they moved to Nashville, Marjie forged ahead with courage and a sense of adventure as she always had done. Yet she found herself in an unfamiliar position. She was not using her professional gifts and training in the traditional way. In a rather transparent article in the May, 2008 edition of this publication, Marjie openly discussed the struggle she was having transitioning from her "old life, which was full of people, adventure and busyness" to her new life in a career-oriented town like Nashville.

However, God has used her talents and gifts in a powerful way in this community and beyond. She welcomed people on Sundays with her infectious smile and affable personality as a greeter. She offered hope and healing as an intercessory prayer partner after communion. She loved on the little ones in our parish in the nursery and Sunday school. She led the women of St. B's into deeper relationships with God and each other as the ECW president. She showed us how to serve in those unseen ministries as a coffee team member. She opened her home for numerous planned and impromptu gatherings of this community. Outside of this community, she shared the gift of hospitality with her neighbors who love her as much as we do and the occasional visitor in the downstairs apartment on Holly Street. She also encouraged new writers to discover and engage their passions. All of these things paint a picture of what it means to be in the priesthood of all believers.

But it is her storytelling that will leave an indelible mark at St. B's. When looking back through old issues of the *Branch*, I'm reminded of what drew me to this community. Before I ever really engaged, it was the *Branch* that told me what this place was all about. The stories, namely due to Marjie's editorial direction, made me want to be a part of this community. While searching for a church home, I was hoping to find a place that would nurture me to a deeper relationship with Christ through the teaching of the clergy; give me the opportunity to meet people in my new town who were serious about their spiritual journeys and would walk with me in mine; and honor the liturgical upbringing I had in the Catholic Church. The *Branch* told these stories through Jerry and Dixon's columns, the accounts of God working through people in the community, and the attention paid to the liturgical seasons, which set a rhythm for the year.

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Marjie leading the women's fall luncheon in 2012.

The Cloud of Witnesses

A tribute to Fr. Jerry and Marjie

From the Community

Will always remember being running partners. Sorry my health did not allow us to continue. I still miss the fellowship.- Dave West, Sr.

To the Villager family, Marjie and Jerry define love, integrity, supporters, loyalty, comforters, faithfulness, honesty, humor, acceptances, fun, and friendship. We will miss you. - Nyla Villager

When I was afraid and ashamed, Jerry and Marjie showed me how to trust in the depth of God's grace. - Matt Rhea

I have never felt more advocated for both personally and professionally. What a healing gift you have been to me. -Adria Lambert

Jerry and Marjie, We remember your first days in Nashville fondly...and we will not forget your years of loving service to St. B's, especially your presence with us in times of great joy and deep sorrow. - Sending you off with love, the Allen family

Thanks for beating us to St. B's by one week, modeling Canadian virtue, persevering, and (most of all) pointing us to Jesus! - Heather and Morgan Wills



Fr. Jerry and Marjie know how to have some fun.

With gratitude to you both, for pointing me towards vulnerability and grace, in equal measure.

- Peace, Brittany Lassiter

Traveling, talking, sipping, laughing, pondering, writing, editing, golfing, nibbling, creating, swimming, growing, learning, walking, exploring, supporting, biking, encouraging, loving, ...missing. - Tom and Bev Mahan

Father Jerry and Marjie,

Thank you for opening our family's hearts and minds to the power and love of Christ! We will miss you! - The Lundgrens

Marjie and Jerry: people of God, steadfast, honest, trusting, at ease with themselves and others, incredibly strong leaders, creators of a healthy and positive staff environment. Thank you! - Julia McGirt

In the 9 years we've been at St. Bs, Jerry and Marjie have been full of smiles, encouragement and hospitality for all six of us. - Jo Ellen Weedman

The Ruleys are grateful for Marjie's leadership with camera, writing, and editing, and for Fr. Jerry's wise counsel and steadfast presence with us in hard times.

- Earl and Mary Ann Ruley

Jerry & Marjie have been constant examples of unconditional kindness. They re-taught me the value of unconditional love. I love you both!- Nathan Lee

Jerry and Marjie have brought stability to our community while at the time allowing the gifts of the congregation to be fully expressed. - Seth Swihart

Jerry, Marjie... the bondings of Cadbury and Murray while we struggled through our challenges, wrapped in your space!... Thank You!- Robert and Kirk Smith

The Smiths have been not only a vessel of God's love and healing in my life, but also great friends and parent figures to me.- Jessica Woodlee

We are thankful for: Jerry for breaking open the Word, Marjie for her gift of words. Jerry for the steady course he set, Marjie for the beautiful snapshots of our lives. God Speed. - Phyllis & Harry Xanthopoulos

Witnesses

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Jerry and Marjie: never pretended to be Christ, but acted like him often. Great windows: I saw Christ through them. - David Thornton

Thank you for encouragement through terribly difficult times, reminding us always of our everlasting hope, the transforming work in Christ. -Sharon Smith

Thank you for persevering in encouraging us to give up fear and to begin the transformation into His image. - Bonnie Bashor

Marjie and Jerry have walked with me through Liberian streets, flown to be with me for a family funeral, and walked alongside me during times of struggle. For the love they have poured out on me and the support they have given me I will be forever grateful. - Kristin Chapman

Marjie and Jerry-my heart hurts thinking of you leaving St B's, but I trust God has a new vision for you. You have been "my rock" spiritually for the past 7 yrs. I can't thank God enough for you in my life. - Pam MacArthur

Jerry and Marjie allowed themselves to be known by each of us; they are family and will remain so always. - Natasha & John Deane

Under Jerry and Marjie's ministry, we've truly experienced Ephesians 2:15,16: "in Himself He [made] the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and reconcile[d] them both in one body to God". Forever grateful for you both! - Novella Dean

Defined grace is "unmerited favor". They favored us with love, patience and compassion. May we practice the grace they showed us as we go on without them as a continuous reminder. - Rob and Kandace Wigington

Jerry, your counseling through words and by -your example, provided confirmation for our conversion to the Episcopal faith—thank you! - Bob and Mary O'Dette

Although Jerry has been rector of the church, Marjie has never been a mere "pastor's wife." Jerry & Marjie carried themselves as a team, as partners. Their roles within our community may have been different, but they have both been of treasured and equal value. - Adam Wirdzek

I am now firmly committed to the Episcopal Church, and specifically St. B's. Having served on vestry and as senior warden in the recent past, I have seen the unique challenges that go with the turf here. I have also seen the grace with which Jerry and Marjie have handled these challenges. They have carried us through a pivotal transition in 2004-2005 to a place of new beginning and stability. Many around St. B's believe a prophecy that was made long before my time here. That St. B's would become a key player in the unfolding of God's kingdom. I trust the Smiths when they tell us they have prayed through this decision with ears to listen. And they believe that we are at the time of needing new voices to take us to the next place in our communal journey.

Transitions are hard and not welcomed. I don't do them well. But, as much as I hate to admit it, they generally bring growth and new life. The Smiths are being called to inspire new life in a different community. I thought we'd have them here until retirement. But God's plans are not our own. Jerry will be celebrating the 40th anniversary of his ordination in May. Marjie has been partnering with him for the entire journey. I feel richly blessed and eternally grateful that God allowed my life to cross their paths for over a quarter of their time in ministry. When this news came up, I eventually recalled what Jerry preached at us for at least a year or so: "The kingdom of God is not about you, or how you feel, or what you think you need. It is about God."

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Fr. Jerry led St. Beezers on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Turkey, and Greece in 2014 & 2015.



From the Clergy

It is hard to over state the effect Jerry has had on me in my life as a priest, husband, father, and friend. If I could sum up what I've learned from him in a few words (an impossible task!) it would be to remember that God always comes first, and that people always trump program. - Fr. Dixon Kinser

I am thankful for the stabilizing and nurturing ministry of Father Jerry Smith. Under his pastoral care and the rich soil of St. B's I (as many others) was able to discern and pursue the call to ordained ministry. I hope, in some way, to reflect the same caring and pastoral love in my own priestly ministry.

- In Ministry, Fr. Robert Rhea+

Jerry and Marjie, you were truly God's chosen people "for such a time as this" for St. Bartholomew's Church. You

brought us together as a community, made us into a family and spurred us on in our journey toward greater maturity in the faith. We will miss you, and we will always remember our time together with joy and thanksgiving in our hearts.

- Fr. Dave and Katrina Wilson

Jerry has been a gracious mentor and friend on my journey to the priesthood. His ministry is such a gift!

- Rev. Margaret E. Peel

Fr. Jerry helped me discover my vocation. He taught me much, by word and example, about what priesthood really means. - Rev. Jason Ingalls

Aldona and I have been around St.B,'s for fifty years and we have never seen it looking better, thanks to the work and dedication of Jerry and Marjie.

- Fr. Stu Phillips

The children's Christmas pageant took place at one of Jerry's first services. Jerry broke into laughter as the camel and its animating inhabitants made its way to center stage. I thanked God that we had received a priest who took joy in ministry.

- Fr. Randy Hoover-Dempsey



Fr. Jerry with Fr. Randy Hoover-Dempsey at St. B's 60th Celebration. Fr. Randy was ordained and a member of staff at St. B's.

C o u r a g e continued from pg. 12

It is the sharing of humanity through story that opens us up to being a community in Christ, together. In the May, 2008 article in which Marjie shared her struggles, she also realized a truth: "I enjoy bringing out the writer in people. I like telling and encouraging their stories. I more than enjoy it; I thrive on the human story. I always have," she said. I'm thankful Marjie embraced this community with courage to share her talents and gifts. I'm thankful for her courage to partner with Jerry in following God's call all over North America, even when it brings uprooting and uncertainty. And, I'm thankful for the lasting impact of her encouragement to discover our voices and tell our stories. It's the stories that make us who we are. It is the collective telling of those stories that's a testament to what makes us family.



Marjie with St. B's women in hats for the Spring Tea.

I'm anxious about what St. B's will look like with new leaders. The Smiths are all I know. My spiritual journey will be forever marked with a Canadian maple leaf. But this is about God. It is about what God is doing in and through Jerry and Marjie, and what He will do in and through the community of St. B's after they are gone. When asking for feedback from the clergy, Fr. Travis may have said it best: "Among the telling aspects of Father Jerry's leadership is the experience I had in learning from him even during his absence. During his sabbatical, the way the community, vestry, and staff lived, served, and responded to each other evidenced years of leading marked by hospitality, attentive patience, trust-building, other-oriented relationship, and responsiveness to the Spirit. That latter quality is what has most significantly shaped me -- Father Jerry's responsiveness to the Spirit, his trust in the bigness and involvement of the Father, and his confidence and rest in the grace that comes through Jesus sets him apart as a pastor, priest, and friend." God knows who we are and what (who) we need.

Jerry and Marjie: Thank you for all you have meant to me personally and to this beloved community of St. B's. Your commitment to personal growth, community, authenticity, and loving each other well will be your legacy. St. B's **is** family, and I believe it was your ministry here that helped us realize that.

Well done, good and faithful servants. Go now in peace to love and serve the Lord. You will always have a place in the St. B's family.



Jerry and Marjie acknowledged for their 10 year mark.

Witnesses

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From Staff

Jerry/Marjie, through your ministry, leadership and friendship I have become stronger in my faith, and much more able to step outside my comfort zone. Thank you for your belief in me, and the ministry of the children. - Carla Schober

When I first started working at St B's in 2007, I was a lost, scared and broke college grad. However, over the course of the next four years, Jerry took me under his wing. He always made a way for me and I never doubted his love for me. - Steven Lefebvre

*Praying is listening
The Kingdom is about God
Doubt and faith not opposites
Unity, constancy, and peace
Thank you Jerry!
- David Madeira*

I was an injured bird when I came to St. B's. Jerry and Marjie brought me under the shelter of their wings where I could rest, heal, and fly, again. - Sally Chambers

Thank you, Jerry, for giving me the opportunity to grow far beyond my own expectations. Both yours and Marjie's support & encouragement along the way have helped make that growth possible! -Teresa Robinson

Jerry and Marjie - I look to you as an example of how I would like to model my relationships whether it be my marriage, friendships, or relationship to Christ. I admire how you handle your relationships with love and care and hope to be able to do the same in mine. - Leslie Tomlinson

I will miss the kindness, loving words and the giving presence that you have certainly made a legacy here. Peace. -Josh Martin

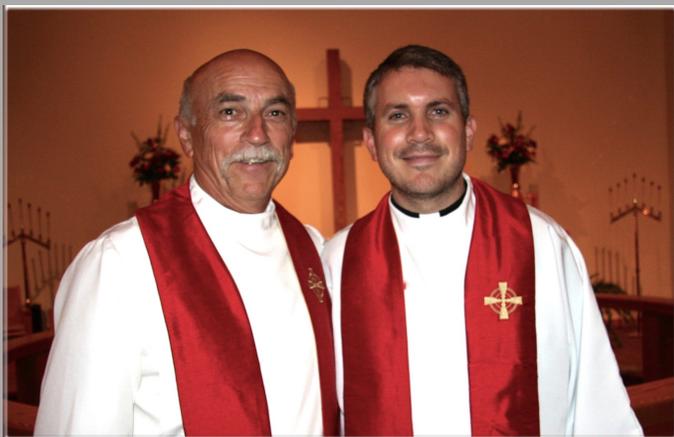
More Family Witness

continued from pg. 16

From Aaron Smith

former St. Beezer and youngest son

Summarizing my parents' impact on my life in Nashville is too difficult to put into short words. In many ways, Nashville is where I became an adult, spiritually and physically. It's where I felt the very real call of God on my life to specific mission and work, rather than in a general sense of being received into the body of Christ. It's where I discovered my love for liturgy, as is done so beautifully and artistically at St. B's, and it's where I met, dated and married this amazing woman who came to share in this call with me. In Nashville, the iconoclastic youthful cynic began to be transformed into the person who believes in the soteriological importance of the gathered worshipping community and all that means. The friends, the community, the people, the area, everything about it conjures sentiments of great joy and warmth. And my parents were at the heart of all of this. Their generosity and ministry modeled for me a different way of living, and a different way of being than is so often displayed in the world around us. Instead of ambition stands service, and the call to learn to be the least among the great. Instead of rigidity in doctrine stands Jesus' words, "Go and learn what this means, I desire mercy not sacrifice." Instead of self empire, stands my parents legacy in their devotion to the church. My father's words, "learn to love them, and everything else will fall into place," is the bedrock of my own ministry. The laughter, the dinner parties, the stories, the prayer, the angst, the questions, the runs, the white water rafting, the worship all rooted in two people that I consider to be my closest friends. God's quote to Israel comes to mind when I think of them: "I will be faithful to the thousandth generation of him who loves Him and keeps His commandments." It is that Godly heritage, passed down, that I yearn to model for my family, and for my parishioners, and for which I am incredibly grateful. For all you are, and all you have done, thank you Mom and Dad.



Father and son at Aaron's ordination.



The Smiths with the Smiths

From Meredith Smith

former St. Beezer and daughter-in-law

Dixon Kinser summed it up when he turned to me during Aaron's diaconate ordination and whispered, "Isn't it weird to look at this and think of when you first came to St. B's?" I started laughing through tears. When I began attending St. Bartholomew's in 2006, I couldn't fathom the friendships and family God had in store for me to gain with Marjie and Jerry Smith.

The first time I met Jerry, he was taking out the trash late one Saturday night. I was on a date with his son and smoking a cigar on his back patio. He waved a quick hello and graciously saved me a drawn out interview. But the next morning at the communion rail, he gave me the bread of Christ by name, which is possibly the most intimidating way for a dad to say, "I know who you are. May God have mercy on your soul."

Luckily for Aaron, Marjie's introduction was far more disarming. We went out for dinner, laughed off the whole "mother of the boyfriend" bit and became fast friends. Her son was at the lower end of our shared interests after all. Not a thing has changed now that I call her Mom and Nana.

Jerry and Marjie have shared with me their love and servitude for Christ in a way I've never seen, firsthand as family through church and now marriage. From the day they invited me into their home and their lives, I watched Marjie's and Jerry's individual and collective dedication, humility, and sacrifice for the greater church and St. Bartholomew's church in Nashville. Without question, Jerry and Marjie will leave St. B's having made many disciples of men and women, myself included.

The St. B's Family Gardens

The Outdoor Sanctuary gets a Name

In appreciation for the love, leadership, and example of Fr. Jerry and Marjie, the vestry voted to name the outdoor sanctuary, *The St. B's Family Garden*, as both a tribute and reminder of how they taught us as a people to be family. The community has been invited to purchase pavers in honor of the Smith's ministry that will create a new section of the *Family Garden*. Pavers are to be inscribed with words that summarize or describe the ministry of the Smith's and can be purchased via www.stbs.net or churchoffice@stbs.net.

The hope of the vestry is that the new section of the *Family Garden*, to be installed this summer, will be not only a visible marker of Fr. Jerry's and Marjie's eleven plus years of ministry with St. Bartholomew's, but also a visible reminder to the community that, in the years to come, we will build upon and extend the work God has done through the Smiths.



Columbarium Update

The present 32-niche columbarium has sold out, and the Vestry approved at its February meeting the purchase of the first of two planned 16-niche additions, which has been ordered. Delivery and installation should start soon. Roughly one third of the niches in the new wing have already been sold.

Each niche costs \$800. That price includes the cost of shipping, installation, and maintenance. Still, for our parish family, a market bargain!

If you have questions about the columbarium, please contact Dorman Burch at butchburch@comcast.net or



Fr. Jerry with Fr. Travis lead an interment at the Columbarium

What Could Go Wrong?

Adventures in Marriage, Moving, and Motherhood.

Nothing stands out about a move between parishes like the move itself.

It all started 40 years ago this May when the Bishop of Algoma sent His Collarship to Holy Trinity in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. He was to serve as curate and plant two new churches in nearby communities.

A move from London to Sault Ste. Marie was akin to moving from Kentucky to Wisconsin, all within the same province. But I wasn't aware of that yet. I was more worried about surviving both the journey and the parishioners. I was 23 years old, seven months pregnant with our second child, and our first one was being a terrible future role model as she popped up and down in her car seat like a colicky prairie dog.

There is no seminary for spouses. So, I was scared. By now, I had conjured up an image of a parishioner that would have made a T-Rex run with its prehistoric tail between its legs. I labelled this homo sapien derivative:



Marjie has had a ministry of presence at St. B's with all generations.

homo parishioneri. I even drew an illustrated cartoon of this Sasquatch of the church.

'We were also traveling on our first real paycheck – not the fumes of the previous summer's employment – and we almost had an auto-divorce when His Collarship stopped at a toy store and paid \$4 for a rubber hippo toy for our daughter. The hippo story has grown more legs than a centipede over the years. To reinforce the legend, we still pick up the odd ornamental hippo for our daughter, who probably detests them.

Our next move, to Manitoulin Island, came two years later. His Collarship was to be the rector of a multi-point parish on the largest freshwater island in the world. This time, we were traveling with a pair of toddlers who were so overtired by the time we arrived they could have detonated a dynamite charge from 10 miles away. We were trading towns with the incumbent, who did not have children. That's important. The idea was that our furniture was to be emptied and theirs loaded ... into the same U-Haul. Unfortunately, the folks at the other hadn't started packing yet.

Because they needed our wardrobe boxes and I needed a bedroom to set up a crib, my counterpart and I agreed that I should empty our clothes into a closet so theirs could go in the box. Her spouse, unaware of the plan, took exception to my being in their room, which was now our room, but why argue. I explained the situation, but my seething 23-year-old self decided something: just because you wear the collar doesn't mean you get to wear the pants.



by *Marjie Smith*
Former Editor of the Branch

Five and a half years later, we left Manitoulin Island for Chapleau, Ontario, moving from farming and tourist country to a lumber and railway town. We were to be there less than two years. It seemed to take that long to drive there. I was driving our little Honda Accord with our two oldest in the back and my friend Deb in the front. My husband and Deb's husband Larry were driving the U-Haul with our youngest sitting between them. We got separated and I thought they were ahead of us as we drove up into the scenic La Cloche Mountains. It was a wet end-of-November day. As the elevation increased, the rain turned to freezing rain. I only discovered this when I negotiated a sharp curve and the car failed to follow. What happened next was not exactly Honda ballet, but it was a full 360 and then some. I not only took out a collection of guard posts, but ended up back-ended into one, which snapped, flew up and smashed the back window between the two children. I knew what had happened because my daughter screamed the details as my son simultaneously exulted, "Cool mom. Do it again." I kid you not.

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Meanwhile, an envelope filled with x-rays of my kidneys, heading from one specialist to another, had escaped through the broken window. After slithering to the far side of the road, it spewed its contents into the far ditch. After moving the kids to safety, where they could watch other cars do more successful 360s, I found myself the only woman on earth to have collected x-rays of a stubborn kidney stone from a roadside ditch in the middle of a freezing rain storm. There is no Guinness book for that.

Eventually, the car was fixed, the stone banished (surgically) and we moved from Chapeau to Timmins, a mining city, where His Collarship was to become both diocesan dean and rector of the cathedral. There are two things that stand out about that first week. First, when I went up for communion, knowing I was being watched, my necklace chose that moment when the body and blood of Christ are ingested to unclasp itself

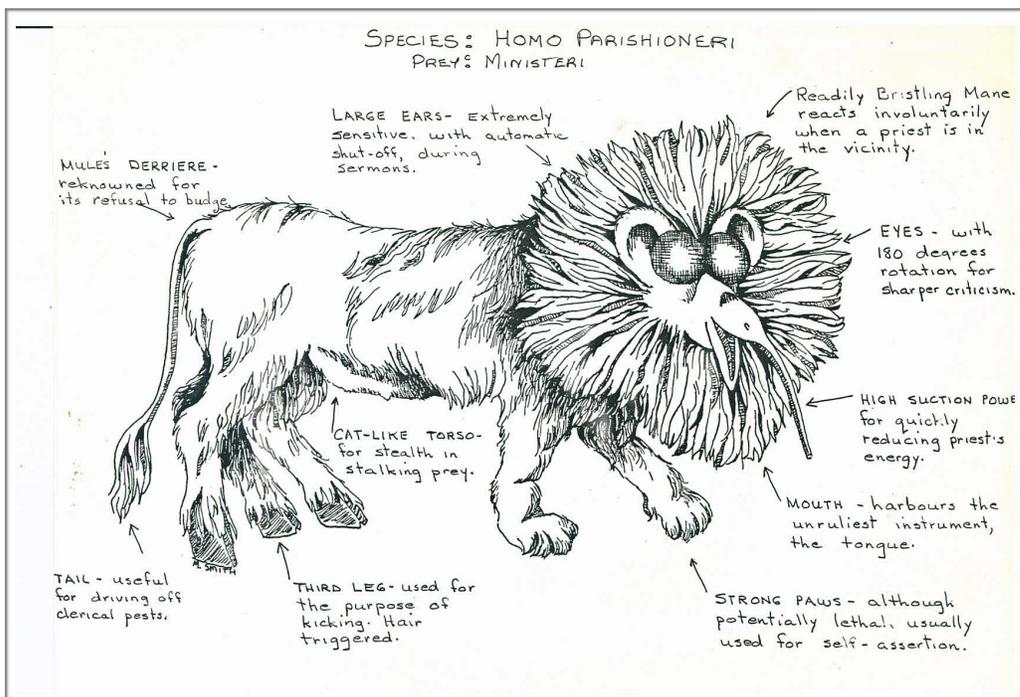
and slither down inside my dress. I'm sure there is an applicable Scripture. I didn't know whether to go fishing for fear it slithered all the way down and left a trail in the aisle or to pretend nothing happened. I chose the latter and spent the rest of the service looking like I had a severe tic as I tried to make that jewelry show its face.

The second memory was of the first phone call requesting "the dean." The voice was so suspiciously British that I was determined it was a friend playing a prank. I summoned my best, dreadful British accent and responded, "Just a minute and I'll get him." More like "Jeust a minit" ... you get the drift. It turns out it was a real Brit - the father of Judy Paulsen, whom many of you now know. She and her husband were new to Timmins and her father, also a collarship, was checking out Anglican churches. I told her the story, later, and she said her dad did mention that I sounded a little funny. Kind man!

When we moved to North Bay, five years later, we were back to the U-Hauls because we were moving in shifts. Our kids who were starting school before we moved, spent a few weeks with friends and then I moved down with the first load of furniture. As we drove south, day turned to night and my eyeballs got fried into dogfood as the U-Haul lights, reflecting off my mirrors, drilled holes in my optical nerves.

It turned out we also had division challenged. Jerry went back to Timmins to live with a hammer he didn't need. Meanwhile, things at my end requiring nails were being handled with my new and only favorite tool: an electric drill. That house had so much metal screwed into it, future archaeologists are going to use it as a basis for theories about Canadian alternative religion practices.

Our next move was more than 11 years later. His Collarship had moved to teach at Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry in Ambridge, PA. After finishing job projects, I moved down New Year's Eve. It seemed so romantic. In fact, it was snowing as we traveled the approximately 10 hours south. My truck was loaded with theological books. The car had everything we'd need to survive three days in our new home until the moving van arrived - except curtains and blinds. We had food, an air mattress, a boom box for dancing in the new year and champagne to toast it. I'm sure we looked as weird to our neighbors as the cicadas that emerged in the spring did to us.



Sketch by Marjie Smith published around 40 years ago.

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Youth Ministry as Sanctuary

Looking Back on This School Year



T Last summer, as many of our youth volunteers were stepping down after keeping the interim youth ministry ship afloat, we talked about how the 2015/16 school year would be a rebuilding year. We had a particularly tight-knit class of students graduate, so we needed to groom new youth leaders. We needed to recruit new adult volunteers. And our parent's advisory group, The Youth Vestry, encouraged me to evolve our programming to meet the needs of our community and play to my gifts.

On some level this year played out as planned. We made some minor adjustments in our gatherings. We've added four new youth volunteers (Lindsay Lee, Allison Hardwick, Meredith Powell, and Aaron Smith). And I've really relished watching members of this community rise up, grow and fill the void left by last year's senior class. But here's the thing about so-called transition years: life goes on. And with it, come all the joys, heartaches, and unexpected trials that any other year holds. But this year, *this* year, was particularly taxing.

This is not the appropriate place to lay out all of the tribulations that plagued our little community this year. Too many of our youth struggled with losses, doubts, and traumas any of us would be overwhelmed with. On the



WHOLENESS MATTERS

by Steven Lefebvre

Director of Youth and Young
Adult Formation
slefebvre@stbs.net

surface we took a hit. Our attendance this year was inconsistent, some of our planning failed to launch, and at times I began to doubt my ability to respond (personally it's been a needed practice in learning to ask for help). However, the more I speak with the parents, teenagers, and leadership of this community, one thing has become abundantly clear: it's good that we're here.

As I look back on this year, and I think about the role St. B's Youth Ministry played in the lives of our parish's families, I recognize how desperately teenagers and their families need sanctuary. Our youth ministry exists

as a place, set apart, with an entirely different value system than their schools, friendship groups, sports teams, and part-time jobs. Three, sometimes four times a week, our youth ministry exists to create loving, grace-filled, kind, hopeful, safe space, so that our teenagers can rest their weary souls and be loved as they currently are. Whether it's a game night (SCGN), a bible study (Liturgy), a safe place to speak honestly (Journey Group), a retreat, or a moment to be with God (Film School), we will be here to encourage, listen, and heal with our parish's youth.

Whether I see you (or your teenager) every other day, once a month, or once a year, you belong here and there is a seat at the table for you. When you think about all the contingencies of what happens as Fr. Jerry leaves this month, take heart in knowing that we will be here, keeping the feast.

Congratulations to our Graduating Seniors:

Kate Cropp
Nolan Gross
Sophia Lauer
Hannah Maclachlan
Olivia Poindexter
Aidan Sullivan



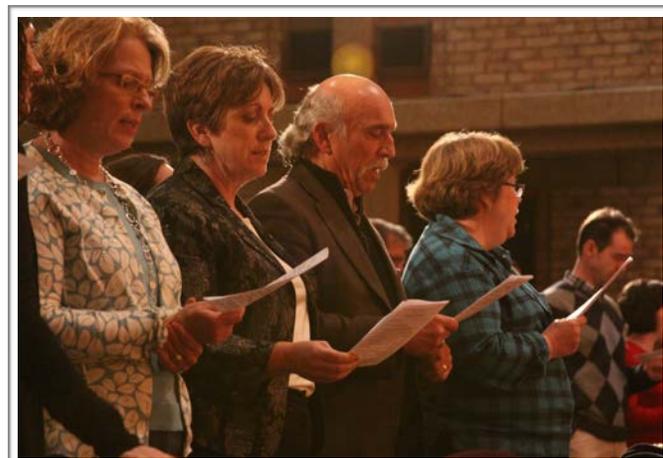
Three years later, we moved to Nashville. This time I moved ahead – into the church rectory – while Jerry finished his contract at Trinity and flew down on weekends to take services. Other than doing war with the roaches, ants and red bees that had already claimed residency and getting poison ivy from the faint memory of a garden, I remember being so lonely that a conversation with a woman who worked at the Macy’s makeup counter seemed like a sorority meeting. My

first recollection of living in a church parking lot was seeing a swarm of SUVs descend like carpenter bees on the building. I thought we were hosting a convention. I didn’t know it was the MDO and preschool parents arriving.

And so another move has come upon us and I can’t think of what possibly could go wrong. It’s just another episode in a life with the parishoneri.



Marjie served as both vice-president and president of the women.



Fr. Jerry and Marjie singing in the audience at a Family Christmas concert.

Come Holy Spirit Come From Springfield to St. B's

by Dave West, Sr.

We lived in Springfield, IL, from 1974 to 1985. Our neighborhood was predominately Catholic (52 kids in the eight houses to the corner).

That included our next door neighbors. They and their kids were about our ages, and we soon became life-long friends. Nancy and Bernice were especially close and often found themselves discussing spiritual things.

One day Bernice came over to tell Nancy about this amazing experience she had just had. Soon Nancy had the same experience. We had heard a little about this “Charismatic Renewal,” but it was so foreign to our Southern Baptist tradition that we were skeptical. Until that day.

We were active in a little Lutheran church in our neighborhood. Even becoming Lutheran had been a stretch

for us, but this was an unusual Lutheran church. While our pastor did not openly embrace the renewal, he didn’t oppose it.

It was not a big church, but soon there were several other couples who had had similar experiences or were curious about them. We began a home group with these people. Over the next eight or so years, nearly every Sunday night, eight to thirty people came to our house to sing, praise, and pray. Many had their own experiences; some just came to take a look and went on their way.

While I loved the Sunday night events, for the first several years, I did not have an experience of my own. I was fully open to it and actively sought it, but nothing seemed to happen.

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W e A r e S t . B ' s

Highlighting the Work of God through Jim Pichert

by Michelle Andrade,

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body’, that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body’, that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

1 Corinthians 12: 12-21, 24-26

We, as the St. B's community, are the body. Each of us has our place in this body and as we navigate our way through our lives, we have the opportunity to see where

we fit in this body and in the world beyond our church. The teachers that serve the children of our church have such a precious gift and opportunity to show our children the love of God and invite them to be living, breathing members of our body along side us as parents. One such teacher is Jim Pichert.

When many of us think of Jim, we think Mr. Jim. He is an integral part of the devotion and support that our children's ministry bestows upon the families at St. B's and has been for more than 25 years. His stature guides and nurtures our kindergartners with gentleness, love, and dedication. His presence in the lives of our children is evident, as he cannot walk down any hall without a hug from a current or past kindergartner. They cherish him. He inspires them by meeting them where they are in their development with such lessons as Pilgrim's Progress (the anticipation was grueling for our child), stinky sardines (we actually bought some to try as a family), and a crown of thorns.

During Lent each year, he and his team bring the children together to speak truth about their shortcomings and discuss different ways of handling situations. A purple crown becomes adorned with colored tooth picks to represent these grievances. The children learn the power of Love as they come in after Easter to see all their toothpicks gone.

Each year he champions another generation of our community into first grade (or in some cases, a second year of kindergarten, because, come on, who wants to leave Mr. Jim?), loving and supporting them all along the way. He still reassures them, in his comforting way, that they are loved. Mr. Jim's presence in the St. B's community doesn't stop in the Kindergarten Sunday School class. He is a member of the chamber choir, is a past vestry member, has served regularly as a chalice bearer and now fills in occasionally, was a participant in a Habitat house, played a little soft ball, and serves as our fearless leader in RITI.

Continued on pg. 25



Mr. Jim and his Sunday morning class.



A Day of Love, Hope, and Healing

Magdalene Graduation at St. B's



On May 20 the Women of St. Bartholomew's will host the women of Thistle Farm's Magdalene residential recovery program at their annual graduation program and reception. Thistle Farms founder Becca Stevens began this program in 1997 for survivors of trafficking, addiction, and prostitution, and it has grown exponentially since then without any government funding. "Today the residential program of Thistle Farms serves over 700 women yearly with advocacy and referral services as well as manages a two-year residential program and an inmate program, Magdalene on the Inside."

At this year's Graduation, we will celebrate the nine women who have completed a two year recovery program which includes housing, medical care, therapy, education and job training. It is a joy and an honor to serve these women and celebrate their significant accomplishment with a special luncheon.

St. B's Women started serving the women of Thistle Farms at the 2011 graduation, held at St. Augustine's Chapel, on the Vanderbilt University campus. The following year, we began the tradition of hosting the graduation ceremony and providing a lunch reception at St. B's. Not only is this day a huge celebration of love and hope for the graduates, the event has

become a highlight of the year for many of us.

St. B's Women plan the lunch reception with food, flowers, gifts, and personal touches to honor the graduates and their family members. Each graduate will receive a gift basket with items donated by the women of our congregation. The baskets contain necessities for setting up a new home, but also feature personalized or handmade gifts such as jewelry, artwork, scarves, or journals, providing an opportunity for St. B's women to share their gifts. St. B's members also donate cash, used to give each graduate a gift card to allow her to buy much needed items including: housekeeping necessities, small appliances, gas, food or clothing as they transition to life on their own.

At the lunch reception, the party continues for the graduates, their families and friends, plus alumni and Thistle Farm staff. Most of the food is donated and prepared by the women of St. B's.

The Women of St. B's prepare all year for this event as it has become a most anticipated tradition! Learn more about Thistle Farms at thistlefarms.org. To get involved with St. B's Women, email stbswomen@stbs.net.



luncheon volunteers and gift baskets.



Come continued from pg. 22

Then one night as I was driving alone and praying for it, I began to pray in a language I had not learned. But the real experience was in my heart. I immediately knew three things:

- I suddenly understood how the Bible is the inspired word of God, even with many different authors and different accounts of the same events.
- I understood that there really is a spiritual world, another dimension that we often don't acknowledge.

In those years in Springfield, we were active in the ecumenical Full Gospel Businessmen. We attended the Lutheran Conference on the Holy Spirit in Minneapolis. And in 1985, we left my dream job to answer a call to join the faculty of what was then called CBN University in Virginia Beach. The next years are a story for another time.

As great as it was, the Charismatic Renewal had problems. But I often yearn for its positive aspects – the closeness you feel to God, the uplifting praise and worship, the fellowship with those who share your experience.

I am grateful that Fathers Jerry and Travis are open to the movement of the Holy Spirit. From hints they have given in sermons, I suspect they would be happy to see more of it. And I pray that for all of us at St. B's.

Dave and Nancy West are long-time active members of St. B's.



We continued from pg. 23

Room in the Inn (RITI) is a ministry supporting the homeless community of Nashville that our church has been participating in for thirty years, and Jim has been a part of it from the beginning and been one of the leaders for decades. His motto: "You can't do this wrong."

His encouragement and causal approach to this service opportunity created a sense of security and safety for our family as we ventured into a new avenue of service in the church. Loving and serving people is something that seems to come so naturally for him, and that inspires us to be more in our St. B's community. He coordinates with the RITI organization and church members that volunteer to help. He then allows people the dignity to find their way in this service opportunity. He offers thanks and acknowledges each individual person for their contribution - down to the children and their presence with people. He converses with the guests, many long-time acquaintances of his, and watches as we all navigate conversations that unfold in ways none of us could have expected.

Mr. Jim has taught all of us that we can offer love and attention while allowing people's true dignity to shine through. He has taught us that there is no wrong way to Love Jesus. He has taught us that sardines are amazing (really, they are disgusting to most, but whose child would have even looked at one without Mr. Jim). He has taught us that cactus (love) really can grow anywhere and that we can take that cacti (love) with us.



Mr. Jim is a pretty good singer, too!

Jim is from Scranton, PA, grew up Congregational Church, attended Bucknell University, where he and wife, Sue, were physics lab partners and both worked during college. Jim went to the University of Illinois before they moved to Denver for a year, and then made their way to Nashville. Jim and Sue came to St. B's in winter of 1980, where they were a part of a "house church" (small group). He holds a PhD in Educational Psychology and heads the Center for Patient and Professional Advocacy at Vanderbilt University, which helps improve quality of care by improving doctors' communication skills with patients and other healthcare professionals. He and Sue have three children, Allison, Carolyn, and Tom. They have one granddaughter, Abigail.



Transitioning in the Spirit

Working the Angles

If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Galatians 5.25

The Feast of Pentecost is the day on which we remember the gift of the Spirit being poured out on the Church (Acts 2), unifying and empowering the followers of the resurrected Jesus as the people of God. As the fiery presence of God once filled the Holy of Holies in Israel (Exodus 40; 2 Chronicles 5) – God present among humanity just beyond the veil – so now the fiery presence of God fills the individual and corporate lives of the Church. The veil is removed – God present *in* his people by his Spirit.

This season's *The Branch* narrates stories of St. B's being God's people in this place. The centerpiece of this edition, of course, is the celebration of Father Jerry's and Marjie's presence in our community. Paul makes it clear in his letters that we are the Father's daughters and sons by the Spirit (Romans 8); the Smiths have taught us what is to journey together as brothers and sisters in Christ – living, growing, serving as the family of God. I believe that one of the most important aspects of Father Jerry's leadership is his responsiveness to the Spirit, and we have all heard his repeated call to set aside our own agendas and judgments, choosing instead to listen and respond to the voice of the Spirit.

As Father Jerry leaves, his call remains. We are entering into a season of transition, a season with both grieving and goodness. At different points in this journey, we all will be grappling with change – holding loosely and even releasing old ways of doing and being, walking through an in-between time, and eventually moving out of transition and into a new beginning. Our call remains: We are to journey together as a family, attentive and responsive to the Holy Spirit, loving each other all along the way.

How do we do this? Drawing on Eugene Peterson's book, *Working the Angles* (a book assigned to me in another life by a certain professor of pastoral theology with the initials JS), I invite you to join me in engaging "a trigonometry of listening":



LIFE in Christ
by Fr. Travis Hines
Associate Rector
thines@stbs.net

***The act of prayer:** Pray alone; pray together. Give thanks, intercede, listen, share.

***The reading of Scripture:** Alone and together, follow the lectionary, read the St. B's Daily, reflect on Sunday's passages throughout the week (Interestingly, in God's timing our Sunday lectionary will have us reading Galatians, Paul's letter in which he calls the community to live and walk by the Spirit.)

***The practice of spiritual direction:** Spiritual direction involves seeking out discerning, prayerful companions who help us give full attention to the presence and movement of God, and who help us make faithful choices in response. We need this as individuals, and as a community.

There will be a number of opportunities for engaging this trigonometry in the months to come.

I began these thoughts with Galatians 5:25. Eugene Peterson translates the verse this way: "Since this is the kind of life we have chosen, the life of the Spirit, let us make sure that we do not just hold it as an idea in our heads or a sentiment in our hearts, but work out its implication in every detail of our lives." These are significant words for us as we enter into this particular Pentecost season. Jesus has brought us into the Father's family, and God has given us his Spirit. Let's encourage each other to remain present to this reality, and journey together through the transition into God's future for St. B's.

Travis



From Glory to Glory

Celebrating the Glory that Grows Within

Being transformed into His likeness with every-increasing glory
-1 Cor. 3:8

Births

Eleanor Avery 3/6
parents Nathaniel & Abby Tylor

Baptisms

Eisley June RuiYan Edgell 2/8
parents Shawn & Leslie Edgell

Wesley Mile Attig 3/26
parents Heath & April Attig

Camden Isabelle Andrade 3/26
parents John & Michelle Andrade

Adelicia Claire Andrade 3/26
parents John & Michelle Andrade

Canaan Elizabeth Jones 3/26
parents Matthew & Megan Jones

Naomi Evelyn Jones 3/26
parents Matthew & Megan Jones

Hannah Perryman Jones 3/26
parents Matthew & Megan Jones

Adam Stanley Latham 3/26
parents Jason & Gaylene Latham

Austen Benn Latham 3/26
parents Jason & Gaylene Latham

Victoria Ava Stranch 4/3
parents Ethan & Nicole Stranch

Clara Adele Smith 4/10
parents Samuel & Jessica Smith

Easton Wyld Michel 4/10
parents Andy & Corinne Michel

Eleanor Claire Newton 4/10
parents James & Emily Newton

Helen Louise Snyder 4/17
parents Erick & Katherine Snyder

Sylvie Katzenmiller Click 5/1
parents Adam Jeannie Click

Eleanor Avery Tylor 5/1
parents Nathaniel & Abigail Tylor

Sandra Adèle Hester 5/8
parents Doug & Sydney Hester

Abigail Caroline Hayden 5/8
parents Josh & Anna Hayden

Owen Fulton Cade 5/8
parents John & Meredith Cade

Claire Monroe Cade 5/8
parents John & Meredith Cade

Eli William Cade 5/8
parents John & Meredith Cade

Gaia Morgan Wood 5/8
parents Asher & Missy Wood

Presley Otto Wood 5/8
parents Asher & Missy Wood

Laurene Campbell Brown 5/8
parents Collin Brown & Fawn Holsombeck

Rock Davidson Shay 5/8
parents Phil & Sonnie Shay

Ever Wynn Shay 5/8
parents Phil & Sonnie Shay

Daily Lux Shay 5/8
parents Phil & Sonnie Shay

Confirmations 4/24

Received 4/24

Emmanuel Oliver
Hellen Otti

Reaffirmed 4/24

Ernestine Guenthner
Jack Guenthner

Deaths

Eisley June RuiYan Edgell 3/12

192 BAPTISMS
125 CONFIRMATIONS
48 WEDDINGS
27 FUNERALS
9 ORDINATIONS

Fr. Jerry wasn't just Rector of St. Bartholomew's. He was a parish priest who personally helped us to sacramentally mark our transitions through life. Thank you for being present in our lives for over 11 years.





the
MEETING
in the
MIDDLE
sundays this summer
in between the services

connect intentionally with others this summer

Join us again this summer in between services for an informal time of coffee, yard games, conversation and relaxing together. Bring a blanket and a book. Bring your favorite game to play. Bring some snacks to munch on. Bring your family and your friends. Meet us in the middle this summer! Children 5 yrs. and older are invited to participate in the liturgy this summer with their families. Nursery for 4 yrs. and under will be offered at both services.

regular formation classes for all ages return aug. 28