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He is Risen 2024



*Photo by Laura Hunt, taken following the
Easter Vigil Service in the Spring of 2022
More pix of this year Palm Sunday on page 15*



A Message from Hilary +

Dear Friends and Companions in Ministry,

Alleluia! Happy Easter! We celebrated on Easter Sunday, March 31, and now we live into this Easter season, a season of Resurrection Hope and Joy. The thing about Resurrection is that God



promises us new life in many ways. Even when we do not feel joyful, and for good reasons, God comes close with hope beyond hope, inviting us to live every day knowing that God is making all things new. Even death has been vanquished by Christ. How do we make such general theological statements real for us in our daily lives; how can God help us to do so?

We can look for the new life all around us, in nature and in our communities. As Richard Rohr writes: “One reason we can trust Jesus’ resurrection is that we can already see resurrection happening everywhere else. Nothing is the same forever, states modern science. Geologists with good evidence can prove that no landscape is permanent over millennia. Water, fog, steam, and ice are all the same thing, but at different stages and temperatures. ‘Resurrection’ is another word for change, but particularly positive change - which we tend to see only in the long run. In the short run, it often just looks like death. The Preface to the Catholic funeral liturgy says, ‘Life is not ended, it is merely changed.’ Science is now giving us a very helpful language for what religion rightly intuited and imaged, albeit in mythological language. Remember, myth does not mean ‘not true,’ which is the common

misunderstanding; it actually refers to things that are always true! Jesus’ first incarnate life, his passing over into death, and his resurrection into the ongoing Christ life is the archetypal model for the entire pattern of creation. He is the microcosm for the whole cosmos, or the map of the whole journey.” <https://cac.org/daily-meditations/the-resurrection-of-all-things-2023-04-10/>

Jesus, the map - I like that. Jesus shows us the way in life, how to love and serve. Jesus shows us Resurrection here and now, and he is our map, our guide, our promise from God that even if it looks like death, it is a movement toward new life. May you know God’s great love for you that can never end and is new every day.

Blessings for the Easter Season,

Hilary+



Un mensaje de Hilary +

Queridos amigos y compañeros en el ministerio,

Aleluia! ¡Felices Pascuas de Resurrección! Celebramos el Domingo de Pascua, el 31 de marzo, y ahora vivimos esta temporada de Pascua, una temporada de esperanza y de alegría y de resurrección. En la Resurrección Dios nos promete nueva vida de muchas maneras. Incluso cuando no nos sentimos gozosos, y por buenas razones, Dios se acerca con esperanza más allá de la esperanza, invitándonos a vivir cada día sabiendo que Dios está haciendo nuevas todas las cosas. Incluso la muerte ha sido vencida por Cristo. ¿Cómo hacemos que tales declaraciones teológicas generales sean reales para nosotros en nuestra vida cotidiana? ¿Cómo puede Dios ayudarnos a hacerlo?

Podemos buscar la nueva vida a nuestro alrededor, en la naturaleza y en nuestras comunidades. Como escribe Richard Rohr:

“Una razón por la que podemos confiar en la resurrección de Jesús es que ya podemos ver la resurrección sucediendo en todas partes. Nada es igual para siempre, afirma la ciencia moderna. Los geólogos, con buena evidencia, pueden demostrar que ningún paisaje es permanente durante milenios. El agua, la niebla, el vapor

y el hielo son todos iguales, pero en diferentes etapas y temperaturas. ‘Resurrección’ es otra palabra para cambio, pero particularmente cambio positivo — que tendemos a ver sólo a largo plazo. A corto plazo, a menudo parece simplemente una muerte. El Prefacio a la liturgia funeraria católica dice: ‘La vida no termina, simplemente cambia’. La ciencia nos está dando ahora un lenguaje muy útil para lo que la religión intuyó e imaginó correctamente, aunque sea en un lenguaje mitológico. Recuerden, mito, no significa ‘no es cierto’, que es el malentendido común; ¡en realidad, se refiere a cosas que siempre son ciertas! La primera vida encarnada de Jesús, su paso a la muerte y su resurrección a la vida eterna continúa siendo el modelo arquetípico de todo el patrón de la creación. Él es el microcosmos de todo el cosmos, o el mapa de todo el viaje.” <https://cac.org/daily-meditations/the-resurrection-of-all-things-2023-04-10/>

“Jesús, el mapa”... me gusta. Jesús nos muestra el camino de la vida, cómo amar y servir. Jesús nos muestra la Resurrección aquí y ahora, y él es nuestro mapa, nuestra guía, nuestra promesa de Dios de que aunque parezca muerte, es un movimiento hacia una nueva vida. Que conozcas el gran amor de Dios por ti que nunca termina y es nuevo cada día.

Bendiciones para la temporada de Pascua,

Hilary+



***Episcopal Visitation,
Sunday, April 14***

***By the Rev Dr Hilary Borbón Smith,
Rector***

Join us to welcome our Diocesan Bishop, E. Mark Stevenson, on Sunday, April 14 when he presides and during our service. We have so many churches in the Diocese of Virginia we have a bishop every two years rather than every year. During Bishop Stevenson’s visitation, Dale Davis will be confirmed, and his husband Arnaldo Cardona



will be received into the Episcopal Church. Confirmation is a way to reaffirm one’s baptism, and, as an adult or older teen, commit oneself to God by taking vows, reaffirming our baptismal covenant, and having a prayer and the laying-on-of-hands from a bishop. Being received into the Episcopal Church, after having been confirmed



by a bishop in another denomination, is another way to claim one’s identity as a Christian and an Episcopalian, by being received by a bishop who says a prayer for the person. Join us to celebrate on April 14!



Our rector Hilary and our deacon Joe to attend CREDO

CREDO is a clergy-wellness conference that addresses many areas of life and ministry, which is offered by the Episcopal Church to clergy and lay church professionals. Both Joe and I are attending CREDO this spring; I go the last week in April and Joe goes in May. I applied to go two years ago and this was the earliest conference available. It is a very popular wellness program for clergy. The total cost to go is \$500.00, which includes airfare; I am going to New Hampshire. The Episcopal Church wants all clergy to attend a conference and therefore makes it affordable to do so. It is recommended that



clergy attend once every five years; this will be the first time I have gone after 24 years of ordained ministry. Because I often went on silent retreats that supported my life and ministry, I had not gotten around to going to CREDO until now.

About CREDO from <https://www.cpg.org/active-clergy/learning/credo/about-credo/>:

CREDO began in the mid 1990s when The Church Pension Fund's (CPF now CPG) Wellness Initiatives Advisory Committee - a group charged with exploring wellness options for plan participants - recommended a program to give clergy a chance to pause their busy, demanding lives and focus on health and well-being through a discernment and wellness conference.

Over the two decades since its inception, more than 400 CREDO conferences have served more than 7,800 Episcopal priests, bishops, and lay employees. Province IX and International CREDO conferences have been held for clergy who are native Spanish speakers.

In 2005, the Presbyterian Church, USA, launched a partnership with Episcopal CREDO and has held more than 80 conferences for Presbyterian pastors. CREDO conferences for ministers in the United Church of Christ began in 2015.



Update on Spanish Ministry at HoCo

By the Rev Frank Castellón, Deacon (retired)

Two of the families that have joined our congregation are going through the immigration process seeking asylum in the US. They are using the services of a legal firm owned by one of our parishioners.

One of the families consists of mother, father and younger son. The second family consists of the older son, his wife and two children. One of those children was born in the US.

While waiting for the resolution to their asylum request, they have complied with all immigration and other legal requirements including the payment of taxes. In the meantime, they have trouble obtaining adequate jobs due to their unresolved immigration issues.



After two years of waiting, they were recently called to appear before a judge to present their case. Upon arrival at the courthouse in Northern Virginia, they and their lawyer were told that due to complications in another unrelated case they would have to wait until June for their hearing.

The immigration process is complicated and suffers from the lack of a sufficient number of judges and other personnel needed to process immigrants, like this family, that are attempting to comply with all that is needed to receive asylum.

Please pray that these families can soon learn whether they will be able to stay in the US and escape the persecution they suffered in their native country.



Health Brigade receives Easter donations

By Bruce MacAlister, Editor

Any check or cash you place in the offering plate during the Easter services goes to Health Brigade. From Holy Comforter head east on Monument Ave, cross “the ditch”, and turn left onto Thompson St and you will see it on your left just before you get to Broad Street. They serve as a “sub-safety net” for those who fall through

the “safety net” where the patients do not have insurance or even medicaid but need medical care. Health Brigade provides comprehensive physical and mental health. There is the 2-minute introductory video at <https://www.healthbrigade.org/2023/06/21/hb2minvideo/>.

No cash or check? Go to www.hoco.org and click the bright yellow Donate Now! button at the bottom to give with a card.



Adult formation updates

By Peggy Hombs, Adult Formation chair

The **Sunday Morning Class** continues its current curriculum *The History of Christianity II: From the Reformation to the Modern Megachurch*. The presenter is Dr. Molly Worthen, associate professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a freelance journalist. The primary focus of this 36-lecture DVD-based course is to place Christianity in its historical context as it transforms from a



relatively homogeneous entity at the end of the Middle Ages into the diverse global religion of today. Presentations explore the basic ideas (and paradoxes) of Christian theology; see how these ideas are embedded in real life; introduce some of history’s most fascinating characters; and see how secular modernity and globalization have transformed Christianity. We will conclude this curriculum on Sunday, June 23rd.

The **Monday Evening Class** will resume via Zoom on Monday, April 8th with its current curriculum *The Fall of the Pagans and the Origins of Medieval Christianity* with Dr. Kenneth W. Harl, Professor of Classical and Byzantine History at Tulane University. The course scope: “The conversion of the classical world to Christianity is one of the fundamental changes



in Western civilization that has been matched only by the discovery of the New World and the industrial revolution... This course will explain the reasons for the clash between the pagans (‘worshippers of the ancestral gods’) and the early Christians that ended in the Christianizing of the Roman world between the 4th and 6th centuries A. D.” We will conclude this 24-part series on Monday June 10th.

Hoco Birthdays

For the month of April:

Kathy MacAlister, 1st; Mike Rey, 8th; Joe Klenzmann, 9th; Gloria Ruggeri, 9th; Laura Hunt, 11th; Lyman Flinn, 14th; Steve Van Voorhees, 22nd; Donna Brodd, 23rd; James Munro, 23rd; Bonnie Atwood, 27th



George Collier retires from Messenger

By Bruce MacAlister, Editor

The third week of every month, the crunch began for George Collier. Formerly educated as an architect at Virginia Tech, George's career



was in graphic arts. His life pursuit was and is photography that included a dark room in his basement. His license plate says "USE FILM" and since retirement, most all the photography he does is with black and white film (see <https://www.georgeacollier.com/>), except volunteer work

he does for non profit organizations.

After he moved from Holy Comforter to St Mark's to join his wife Malinda, long the director of lay ministries there, he continued to be the composer and layout artist for the monthly Messenger. He had transformed it from a small-format black and white newspaper style to a glossy, letter size, image-filled, magazine. At first the cost of printing color was so high that only the front page was in color. As more and more parishioners moved to reading it online, the cost of printing the few paper copies each month made full color feasible. Holy Comforter has had a notable monthly newsletter. Much of what made it appealing was due to George's work.

He has enjoyed doing the Messenger, but as other retirement activities have consumed more of his time, he has decided it's time to step down from it.



Holy Comforter news outlets

By Bruce MacAlister, Editor

With the closing of the monthly Messenger, the ever-popular eMessenger and notices in the Sunday bulletin will be the main news outlets* for HoCo parishioners and friends.

Notices and news articles can be sent directly to Chris Hall and Vera Limn. If you prefer, you can send your article to me and I will proof and lay it out and then send it to Chris for the weekly eMessenger and Vera for the Sunday bulletin.

Articles for the eMessenger must, of course, be much shorter and with no more than one small graphic. About 125 words is suitable. (Many Messenger articles were 400 to 700 words with two or more images.)

Notices for the Sunday bulletin should be even shorter, a 25 word paragraph.

Longer articles can be accommodated by having them placed on the hoco.org website with a short introduction in the eMessenger and a link to the article. Send those longer articles to me for editing and conversion for the website.

Email addresses: Chris at daddyhuuu@gmail.com or me at editor@hoco.org.

* The monthly Messenger could reappear if you have experience laying out newsletters, magazines, or professional publications and volunteer to take over the laying out of the Messenger. Contact me at editor@hoco.org or our Rector, Hilary Smith.



Brief history of the Messenger

By Bruce MacAlister, Editor

Deep in the Holy Comforter archive of Messengers there are copies going back 70 years to 1953. Most churches have long had some sort of regular newsletter and most mailed them to parishioners either weekly or monthly. Today they usually go by email.

My first memory of the Messenger was when we joined in the mid-1970s. It was typed onto stencils and duplicated it on a mimeograph machine (wikipedia.org/wiki/Mimeograph) by the church secretary. Ah, that mimeograph smell that permeated the hallway each week. As technology improved, photocopiers were used. I remember the typed master being sent out to a duplicating company for photocopies because



high-speed photocopy machines - called Xeroxes - were too expensive for a church to have.

The editing and layout moved over the years from the church secretary to skilled parishioners like Don Craghead and the Rev Hew Stith using Aldus/Adobe Pagemaker publishing software (replaced by today's Adobe InDesign). It migrated

htm. We surveyed our members and found that we could stop mailing to most of them.. Mailing was both expensive and took a lot of staff and volunteer time. We had a team of mostly ladies who folded, stuffed, and attached mailing labels each month. Then the copies were hauled off to the post office with a check for mailing.

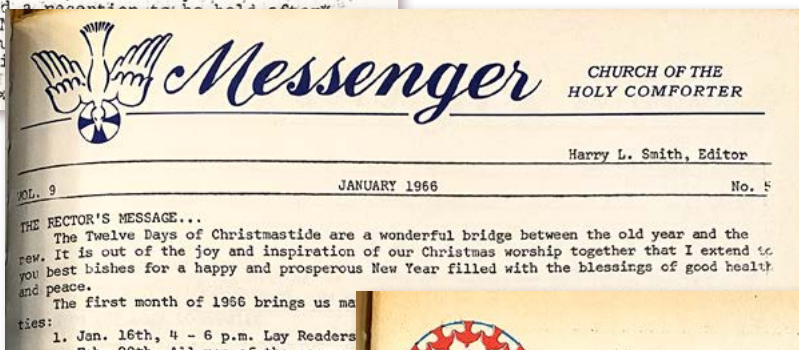
Once the mass mailing ended, printing the 25 or so we needed to mail and have in the Narthex made it affordable to go to full color. The weekly eMessenger was added to be more immediate and timely with the monthly Messenger becoming the place for longer articles, recent past events, and lots of photos.

Will anyone miss the monthly Messenger when we end it with this issue? We will find out from you. Send your comments to either me at editor@hoco.org or our rector at hbshococlergy@gmail.com



May 1958

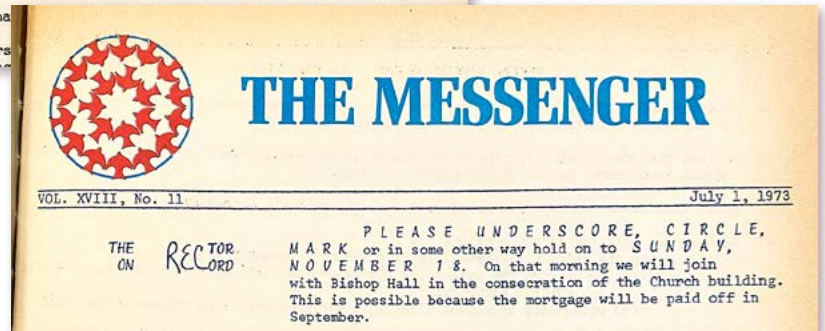
back to MS Word and the very busy secretary until the early 2000s when I took on editing and layout. At that point we had a higher speed copier. For more control than Word offered, I used LibreOffice Writer. My model was a multi-column newspaper, an 8-by-7 inch 8-page black and white issue.



January 1966

Eventually both editing and laying out the Messenger was more than I had time to do so George Collier agreed to take on the layout work. With a career in graphic arts, George wanted a magazine format with lots of pictures and full letter size page. As you see in the pictures, at first they were black and white, color being very expensive. Later HoCo got a copier that could do color but the cost per page was so high we did only the front page in color.

Then came the Internet and people getting their information online; it meant members wanted the church to communicate online and the Messenger needed to be accessible at hoco.org/newsletter.



And here's a fun thing - the very first Messenger issue - Volume 1, Number 1 can be found and perused [here](#), the HoCo history page. A direct link to the paper itself is [here](#). If your display is not large enough for it to open fully, your cursor should look like a magnifying glass. Click and zoom in to read it.

Notice the cost of printing and mailing to 500 members, and, the return address of the church in the addressing area.



Vestry, officers and liaison assignments

The Vestry is elected by and represents the congregation. The Rector is also a member of the Vestry and chairs its meetings. The Vestry has authority over funds among other things.

- Angie Palmer, Senior Warden
- Lian-Marie Holmes Munro, Junior Warden, Liaison to Worship
- Jamey Hooks, Treasurer, Liaison to Finance
- Julie Edwards, Register, Liaison to Pastoral Care
- Debi Taliaferro, Liaison to Outreach
- Don Ellison, Liaison to Property
- Evan Herr, Liaison to Children and Youth Formation/Education
- Susan Boze, Liaison to Parish Life
- Open Position, Liaison to Adult Formation/Education

The Officers are only ones who can sign checks and contracts that the Vestry has approved.

The Officers are Senior layperson Junior handles Warden's when she- the Treasurer the money, and sees to the keeping of the church records and takes minutes of the Vestry meetings.



The Officers Warden, the in charge, Warden who the Senior duties he cannot, who handles the Register who



Vestry Property Leader ***By Don Ellison***

I will be serving as the Vestry lead for property. In this article, I would like to introduce myself, provide some information on upcoming property activities, and also ask for your support. First of all, I have some experience with this topic. I was Junior Warden at a parish with a 140 year old building. Indeed, I am familiar with there being 1, 2 or more issues needing attention and a few more waiting in

the wings. Second, I will be working with our Senior Warden, Angie Palmer, to develop a comprehensive facility review that:

- (a) identifies and creates a timeframe for building elements and systems, which will in turn
- (b) allow us to prioritize current needs and anticipate future ones, especially significant capital improvements.

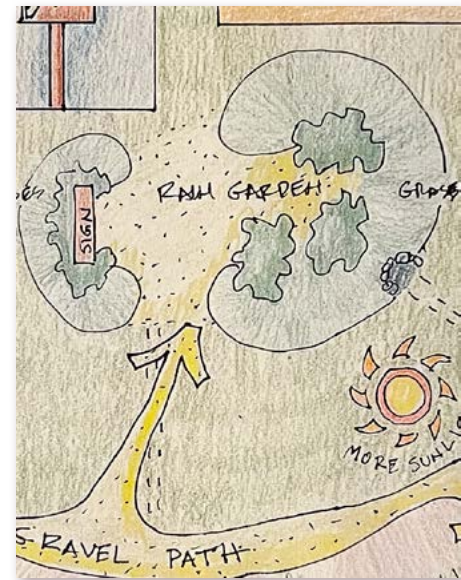
Third, I will be forming a property committee. Let me know if you would like to be a member. I can be contacted at don.ellison.rva@gmail.com.



Earth Day and the plans of the Creation Care Ministry ***By Laura Hunt***

April is Earth month and to honor it, Hoco-Eco's Creation Care Ministry is establishing a garden along the front of the church on Monument Avenue. Monument Avenue is HoCo's face to the world, yet neighbors who walk by our church daily don't notice us. We anticipate that a beautiful **Creation**

Garden with signs welcoming people and explaining our purpose might improve our visibility and draw attention to our celebration of God's creation. We envision the garden as a welcome mat to the community, informing our neighbors of who we are and what we value, and inviting them to visit. We want everyone to see our church as a place of beauty with a deep commitment to the natural world.



Susan Boze and Tracy Council have been the leading forces in the establishment of the Garden Working Group. They drew up a list of native and pollinator plants and asked new HoCo member, retired landscape architect Arnaldo Cardona to design our landscape restoration project. His plans were exhibited at the Environmental Ministry Conference at VTS last February.

In addition, Arnaldo wrote an article for the American Society of Landscape Architects, discussing his work with HoCo. It was then reprinted by the Anglican Communion Environmental Network. Our church is thus getting international attention in Europe, Africa, and Southeast Asia. You can read his article by clicking <https://thefield.asla.org/2024/02/13/community-groups-going-green-in-response-to-climate-change/>

VA Natives - Pollinator Plants



In order to implement Arnaldo’s design, we are inviting the congregation to sponsor specific flowering plants and shrubs, including mountain laurel, phlox, asters, ferns, and black-eyed Susans. Congregants can also make donations to purchase gravel for a path connecting the new plantings, plus items like peat moss, pine bark mulch, and organic fertilizer. Together, the HoCo community can create a garden of native and pollinator blooms that will provide food and shelter to bees, butterflies, birds, and other wildlife.

On Saturday, **April 20**, Hoco will celebrate Earth Day by holding a community **Garden Work Day**, followed by a special **Creation Sunday Eucharist** on **April 21**. Everyone at HoCo is invited to help celebrate spring and nature’s renewal of life this Easter.

The full drawings you see above are on the Hoco Eco Ministry page - [here](#).

The plan drawing is [here](#).

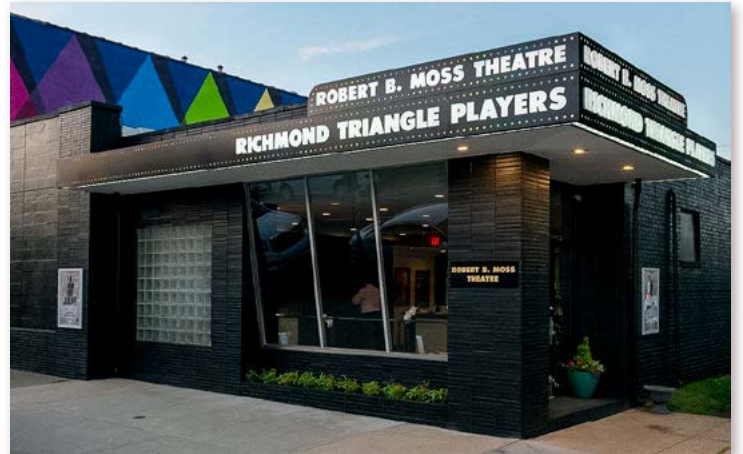
The plant listing is [here](#).



Airswimming directed by **Melissa Rayford**

By **Julie Edwards. Proud Mama**

Richmond Triangle Players will be presenting the play, *Airswimming*, directed by Melissa Rayford. Melissa is my daughter! The show runs from April 12-May 4. Link for purchasing tickets: <https://rtriangle.org/>



Set in 1920’s England, *Airswimming* is based on the true story of two women who have been incarcerated in a hospital for the “criminally insane” for having borne illegitimate children. Forgotten by their families and not released until the 1970’s, Dora and Persephone adopt alter-egos, Dorph and Porph, to enact their fantasies and survive the silence of incarceration. By turns very funny and moving, *Airswimming* reminds us of the forgotten women of these generations in both Britain and Ireland.



Irish Repertory Theatre



May Men at the Movies **- Diva**

By Steven Van Voorhees

Note that there is no April movie (see next article). The next Men at the Movies will be Tuesday, May 14th, when our film will be Diva.

I'm struggling to find the right words to tell you what this film is like and why it is so important for us to experience. It is the absolute golden icon for many of the movies that follow it in the 1980's and 1990's. Diva represents a departure from the films of the 1960's and 1970's and is a pioneer for many later films to copy in style, color, plot, editing, and sound. It was named cinema du look, an interesting 'franglish' title. What is cinema du look? Let's have Jason Fuhrman of Tone Madison



tell us, "(Diva) invites us to live in the present moment by surrendering to the magnetic flow of its rhythmic editing, slick surfaces, saturated color palette and endlessly inventive mise-en-scène." Cinema du look is bright, fast and loud in the way younger people seem to be to older, quieter human versions.

But there's more - this is a crime caper with two stolen audio tapes; deadly thugs; ruthless and dirty players; a Zen practitioner who turns out to be a hero; a vehicle chase through the Paris Metro; and some of the most attractive crash pads one has ever seen. There's Jules, the young Paris postman with a motor scooter with a Rolls Royce hood ornament; a killer who prefers an awl as a weapon; a woman (Nadia) who dies in the first 12 minutes of the film and who sets up most of

the events in the movie; two Taiwanese men who want the illegally copied tape of the Diva that Jules has; the young Vietnamese woman saved from the streets by the Zen philosopher who



wears snorkeling gear to cut onions; two assassins called the "Priest" and "The West Indian", who are after Jules to get the tape he doesn't know he has; and, of course, the Diva of the title, the real opera star Wilhelmina Wiggins Fernandez, who plays Cynthia Hawkins, whose singing captures Jules' heart and leads him to secretly record her aria in spite of her absolute demand to only be heard live.

Forty years after the film was released, Westly Morris, the *New York Times* art and culture critic, saw it for the first time. He loved it. He said in his *New York Times* article, "The film manages to be both a thriller and an art movie. (It) almost never loses its moral, romantic, and aesthetical ethical priorities - it needs them bound together."

Let's ride through Paris with Jules as he discovers why he is being chased by all these people and how he can survive their machinations. I bet you won't forget this one! I saw it in the 1980's and have never forgotten the gory images and they still reside in my mind.

As usual, we will gather in the Parlor at 6:00 pm for fellowship; the film viewing and discussion commence at 6:30 pm. Bring your own food and drink... and a friend!



Men at the Movies – two special announcements

By Steve Van Voorhees

First, due to scheduling challenges and absences, there will be no April Men at the Movies! Our next regularly scheduled film viewing date will be Tuesday, May 14th (2nd Tuesday as usual).

Second, here is a “preview of coming attractions”:

May - *Diva*,

June - *Munich*,

July - *Local Hero*,

August - no movie/summer break.

Then we will resume in the fall with:

September - *Bagdad Café*.

Local Hero and *Bagdad Café* are from the nominee list participants gave me. Please continue to give me your nominations for upcoming months.

Thank you for your interest in the art and science of the moving pictures. See you at the movies!



April Book Club – The Violin Conspiracy

By Peggy Hombs

Following our March book group’s deep dive into Russell Shorto’s history of the Dutch settlement in New York, we will switch gears with our April selection to *The Violin Conspiracy* by Brendan Slocumb. We will meet on April 16th (3rd Tuesday) at 7:00pm via Zoom. I am your contact if you have any questions. I am listed in the online church directory.

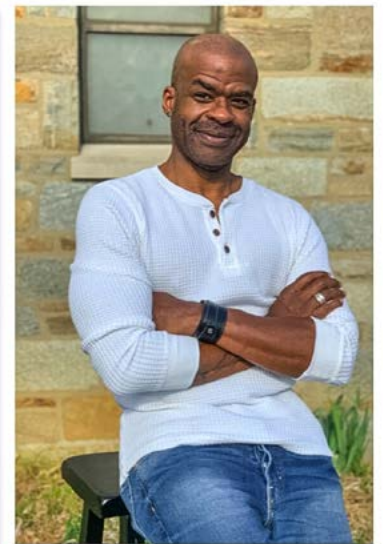
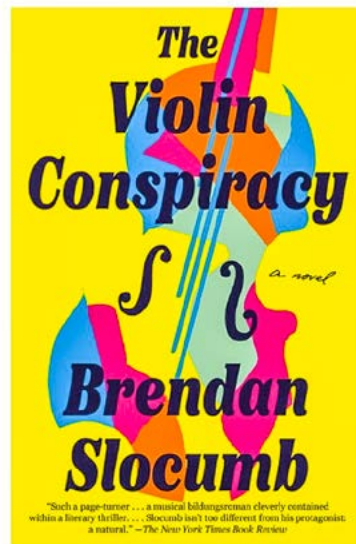
Here’s brief description: Ray McMillian is a Black



classical musician on the rise - undeterred by the pressure and prejudice of the classical music world - when a shocking theft sends him on a desperate quest to recover his great-great-grandfather’s heirloom violin on the eve of the most prestigious musical competition in the world.

Growing up Black in rural North Carolina, Ray McMillian’s life is already mapped out. But Ray has a gift and a dream - he’s determined to become a world-class professional violinist, and nothing will stand in his way. Not his mother, who wants him to stop making such a racket; not the fact that he can’t afford a violin suitable to his talents; not even the racism inherent in the world of classical music.

When he discovers that his beat-up, family fiddle is actually a priceless Stradivarius, all his dreams suddenly seem within reach, and together, Ray and his violin take the world by storm. But on the eve of the renowned and cutthroat Tchaikovsky Competition - the Olympics of



classical music - the violin is stolen, a ransom note for five million dollars left in its place. Without it, Ray feels like he's lost a piece of himself. As the competition approaches, Ray must not only reclaim his precious violin, but prove to himself - and the world - that no matter the outcome, there has always been a truly great musician within him.



Walking to Santiago

By Bonnie Weber-Lehman

Does the thought of two 70 year olds walking 500 miles carrying backpacks holding everything they need and sleeping in hostels along the way sound like a crazy idea? It sounds a little crazy to us too, but also inviting and exciting,



and it is a journey David and I are hoping and planning to make this spring! We want to share with you our plans to make a pilgrimage, walking the Camino de Santiago (The Way of Saint James) from St-Jean-Pied-de-Port in southern France across northern Spain to Santiago de Compostela.

The Camino de Santiago is a network of pilgrimage paths leading to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain where the remains of Saint James are reputed to be buried. It has been a pilgrimage destination since at least the 10th century. Today hundreds of thousands of people of all faiths and of no faith make the journey each year from a variety of motivations and for all kinds of reasons.

When I first learned of this medieval pilgrimage route more than 40 years ago, it immediately called to me. The desire, or the nudge, has remained through all the following decades, and the idea has also taken hold for David. We believe walking the Camino holds a unique opportunity for reflection, renewal, personal and spiritual growth, and a deepening connection with God.

In mid-April we plan to pull on our hiking shoes, hoist our backpacks, grab our walking poles, and set off over the Pyrenees to Santiago.

We will be on the path for about 45 days, returning in early June.

Along with our excitement, we also feel some trepidation about the challenges we will face. One of the primary challenges will be the sheer physical challenge of walking 12-15 miles a day in all kinds of weather with the accompanying aches and pains. There will be emotional and spiritual challenges as well that will provide lessons to be learned and opportunities for growth. We expect these might include dealing with crowded hostels, plans that go awry, illness or injury, getting along with all kinds of people, facing so much that is unknown, and being in a new culture and outside our comfort zone. We will be challenged to learn to let go of expectations and to accept what each day brings. If you have seen the movie *The Way with Martin Sheen*, you have an idea of some of what we may experience.

Walking the Camino will not be just an arduous physical trek; it will also be a shared experience that brings pilgrims together in a sense of community and camaraderie. We anticipate being the recipients of many blessings that may come



from experiencing the rich history and culture along the way, beautiful scenery, daily adventures, fun and joyful times, our time of reflection, the community of pilgrims from all over the world, and the spirit of the Camino itself. One of the gifts of the Camino that we have already received is that our younger son, Daniel, plans to make the pilgrimage with us.

As we lace up our boots to begin our journey, we will be mindful of the countless millions

of pilgrims who have walked this path before, leaving behind traces of their stories and lessons learned. It is a shared journey that transcends time and connects every pilgrim in a shared quest for meaning, growth, and community. We endeavor to walk as pilgrims in a spirit of trust, openness, mindfulness, gratitude, and humility. For us, walking the Camino is more about the journey and less about the destination itself.

We will carry thoughts of all of you with us as we walk this path, and we will draw on the encouragement and friendship that you have offered us. Your prayers and well-wishes will be our companions in spirit as we embark on this transformative journey, embracing the unknown and surrendering to the rhythms and grace of the Camino.



Lay Preacher Training Curriculum opens

From the Episcopal Preaching Foundation via the Episcopal News Service

The Episcopal Preaching Foundation will launch in April a new one-year curriculum for dioceses to use for lay preacher training. Interested dioceses are invited to attend one of the informational webinars scheduled for April 9 and 17.



The Lay Preacher Training Curriculum (LPTC) consists of a 12-month program of self-study video and printed materials, moderated by one or more diocesan-appointed trainers who will receive training from EPF staff.

The curriculum can be used in person, on media platforms like Zoom, or a combination of the two. The training utilizes the best techniques

for adult learners, and half of the students' work will be preaching in small groups to feedback, hence, learning by doing.

EPF will offer training for the trainers in May and June so they can recruit students over the summer and begin the program in September. An EPF staff member will assist in helping dioceses get started and is available to troubleshoot and provide support on an ongoing basis.

The Lay Preacher Training Curriculum was developed with support from a grant from Trinity Church Wall Street. A two-year pilot training program was offered for 30 students in six dioceses (North Carolina, Minnesota, Nebraska, Lexington, Central Gulf Coast, and East Tennessee). The 30 successful students were celebrated and commissioned at the Washington National Cathedral on November 11, 2023. Feedback from students and their diocesan trainers has been incorporated into the final program, notably by shortening the training to one year.

Bishop Scott Barker of Nebraska commented that his participants "...loved the fellowship... becoming increasingly articulate evangelists". Bishop Barker's full video testimonial is at: <https://youtu.be/hBREi2WTPkI>.

The informational webinars will be offered on two dates: April 9 at 5:00pm and April 17 at 2:00pm, (both times Eastern). Bishops and their diocesan leadership are invited to register online at: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeFnoMSgonqagSTXPYeDYjV2cyufVQZfvnAsNV3r8w8AHy8Pw/viewform>

Dr. Stephen Smith, EPF National Coordinator of the Program summarized the potential of the program to dioceses:

"By lifting up these newly minted lay preachers, their dioceses will have the benefit of not only a unique voice within each of their home parishes but also a potential resource to augment preaching rosters across the diocese."

If you have questions or would like more information, contact the coordinator of the Lay Preaching Program, the Rev. Dr. Stephen Smith, at revdupstephen@gmail.com.



Presiding bishop committee announces process for petition nominations

By Episcopal News Service from the Office of Public Affairs, the Episcopal Church

[The Most Rev. Michael Curry's nine-year term as presiding bishop concludes Oct. 31, 2024, editor]

March 18, 2024, The Episcopal Church Joint Nominating Committee for the Election of the Presiding Bishop (JNCPB) has set its process

for petition nominations for bishops to stand for election as the 28th presiding bishop at General Convention in June 2024.

In addition to its canonically mandated work to discern and nominate at least three bishops as a committee, the JNCPB is also charged with “establishing a timely process for any bishop

or deputy to nominate any other member of the House of Bishops through a petition process, and for each Bishop so nominated to be vetted through the same process of background and reference checks as all nominees, and for each Bishop so nominated to be included in the information distributed about the nominees” (Canon I.2.1(d) (4)).

The procedure established by the committee for nominations by petition is outlined below.

The canons limit the petition process to any bishop or deputy to the 81st General Convention. Those individuals may indicate their desire to nominate a bishop who is not included on the list of nominees for presiding bishop that will be announced on April 2.

- **The intent-to-nominate period will open Wednesday, April 3, at 12:01 a.m. EDT and close at 11:59 p.m. EDT Monday, April 15, at 11:59 p.m. EDT.**

- **The General Convention Office will send an email to all bishops and deputies containing the link to the nomination form that must be used.**

Any bishop or deputy wishing to nominate a bishop must certify on the form that they have that bishop's permission. Nominations cannot be accepted from alternate deputies.

The following information must be provided on the form:

- ◇ The full name of the bishop or deputy submitting the nomination, including:
 - diocese (or other position) in which the nominating deputy or bishop currently serves
 - work/office phone number
 - cell phone number
 - work or personal email address
- ◇ Full name of the bishop being nominated, including:
 - diocese (or other position) in which the bishop currently serves
 - work/office phone number
 - cell phone number
 - preferred email address
 - signed consent of the bishop being nominated (included on the nomination form)

Applications to be completed by the petition nominee will be forwarded to the nominee upon receipt of the completed nomination form. The bishop must complete the application form and return it to the committee no later than 72 hours after the nominee received the application to allow for proper vetting as required by canon.

The canons require that any bishop whose name is submitted in this process must undergo the same background screening process that the JNCPB completed for its nominees, including, but not limited to, criminal records check, credit check, civil court records check, driver's license check, psychological examination, and submission of a physical examination report.

For more info and the entire article, please click this [link](#).

Palm Sunday 2024



Church of the Holy Comforter, Richmond

a parish in the Diocese of Virginia under the Episcopal Church in the USA

which is part of the worldwide Anglican Communion

Monument Avenue at Staples Mill Road

web - www.hoco.org; e-mail - office@hoco.org;

phone 804-355-3251; fax 804-355-0049

[Hoco web site calendar page](#)

Schedule of church events following the Covid-19 period (still evolving)

- **Sundays:**

- ◇ 8:45am Adult class in the Parlor
- ◇ 9:00am Sunday Morning, Choir practice in the choir room
- ◇ 10:00am Holy Eucharist Rite II, in person with nursery available; the service is live-streamed on Facebook and posted following the service

- **Mondays:**

- ◇ 7:00pm Adult class, Zoom

- **Wednesdays:**

- ◇ 11:45am Centering Prayer, in person in the in the church
- ◇ 12:15pm Holy Communion, in person in the church

- **Thursdays:**

- ◇ 4:00pm Lectionary Study, Zoom
- ◇ 7:00-8:15pm Weekly choir rehearsal

Food Pantry Hours:

- ◇ First and third Saturdays, 11:00am to noon
- ◇ First and third Tuesdays, 5:30 to 6:30pm

Veterans Shelter:

- ◇ Fourth Thursdays, prep in HoCo kitchen, 5:00pm, delivery to the shelter, 5:45pm

Side by Side Dinner:

- ◇ Fourth Thursdays, prep in HoCo kitchen, 4:00pm, deliver to Side by Side, 5:15pm

Community Meals:

- ◇ First Tuesdays, 5:30 to 6:30pm

Editing of the Messenger is done by Bruce MacAlister, the layout by George Collier.

