

# InSpire

## Our Shrine Mont experience

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Calming, peaceful, and tranquil. These are the adjectives that describe our time at Shrine Mont. When the opportunity to go to Shrine Mont arose, we knew we had to jump at it. While we were unsure of what to expect, the simple idea to get away from the hustle and bustle was something we looked forward to! As Mr. McBeth drove through the mountains, we began to realize that civilization was evading us: fewer grocery stores, restaurants, and multi-lane roads. However, we were soon made aware of the beauty that Virginia had to offer.

On our first day, we quickly unpacked and received a grand tour from Mr. and Mrs. McBeth. Dinner time came quickly, and we were eager to get some food. Later, we engaged in an exciting pickleball match with Wes and Colin whose skills made us realize that we should probably stick to tennis.

Later that evening, a brief shower occurred, leaving behind a beautiful rainbow,



*(Left to right) Belinda Ashitey, “Mr. Dennis” Jones, Bernice Ashitey, atop North Mountain*

atop of an orange sky. To end the night, we tried our hand at making s’mores. Although we burnt a few marshmallows, it was an enjoyable end to the first day which made us eager to see what the next day had in store.

On Saturday, we woke up early to walk around the pond before the morning prayer. During breakfast, Rev. Jo told us about a hike to the Cross with an incredible view; however, we also heard about a hike to North Mountain. Apparently, due to the growth of trees at the Cross, the view would be obstructed. Therefore, we decided to go with Mr. Dennis and hike up North Mountain. While we heard stories about the exhausting hike, we were unsure how grueling the trek would truly be. “Onward

comrades to North Mt! We may not know who may return, but we will go down as legends!” Jokes aside, we were grateful for the experience. Thank you Mr. Dennis for taking us; your motivation pushed us to new heights. (Quite literally) Please enjoy the pictures we gathered from the hike; no words will adequately describe the sights and sounds.

Following the hike, we were exhausted. Luckily, we had made it back in time for lunch and what seemed to be a waning water gun fight. With Father’s Day approaching, we decided that we would get our father a gift to not only remember our time at Shrine Mont but to

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*Jo Belser, our Rector*

*“...we trust that God has arranged things—is arranging things—for our healing and health.”*

## The spirituality of healing

“The arc of creation bends toward healing.” That’s what my spiritual director said when I was preparing for hip replacement surgery on June 25. He said that he was quoting Rabbi Ed Friedman, the family systems guru. Although I can’t find this quote, it has given me a lot to think about as I go about the task of physical healing.

That I have been thinking about the spirituality of healing during my recovery may surprise you. After all, the food, hydration, exercise, rest, prayer, and the care we receive all play important roles in physical healing. However, so does remembering that God is involved in all that goes on, that we are thankful for life and health, and we trust that God has arranged things—is arranging things—for our healing and health.

This attitude toward healing makes the recovery regime a kind of sacrament: an outward expression of an inner grace. It also helps when you don’t *want* to take the drug or do the exercises.

Then again, having creation bent toward healing is quite revealing about God. It tells us what God is like: predisposed toward healing and health, and that this is God’s desire for us.

Of course, there are times where health and healing aren’t completely possible in this life. I’m thinking of “systems failure” kinds of illnesses and chronic diseases. God’s will for us is still health and wholeness, health and wholeness of a type that goes well beyond how our body parts work.

Of course, our individual physical systems can become so damaged that physical healing is not

possible. So, too, God provides another kind of healing for us all, a healing at our death. When talking about his death in John 12:24, Jesus said that the death of one becomes the birth of many more. And in Christ Jesus’ death and Resurrection we know that our final healing will come after we survive a while longer in this life.

All this makes me very grateful for the gift of life and healing that God provides. It also gives me a new sense of hope for our planet. If God has ordered creation to “bend it” toward healing, hasn’t God also done so for our planet?

Thank you for your prayers and other expressions of love and care—they also are essential for healing, and I appreciate them all.

*~ Rev. Jo*

## We made a difference

For almost two months the members of VOICE Alexandria, including Resurrection, advocated for affordable housing through the City’s FY2025 budget process. They did so in collaboration with other organizations, including YIMBYs of NoVA, and Alexandria and African Communities Together. Rev. Jo served as a key member of the strategy team. From the first public budget hearing on March 11 to the final City Council vote on

the FY2025 budget on May 1, VOICE was front and center at every opportunity. Here’s how we made a difference:

On **March 11 and 16** we attended the first **City public hearings** and urged Council to put an additional \$10 million into the housing budget specifically so that at least one of two approved projects could move forward: Elbert Avenue being developed by Community Lodging with a funding gap of \$10 million

(28 rental preservation and 63 new construction).

**Throughout March**, VOICE members **wrote letters** to Council and **met individually** with Mayor Wilson and Councilmembers Aguirre, Bagley, Chapman, Gaskins, and McPike. During the **April Add/Delete session**, Councilman McPike, supported by the majority of councilmembers, added \$3 million in one-time funds.

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## Take a drive

Last month, I wrote about Alexandria's historic walks focusing on African American history. It's summer now and it's hot. If a walk isn't appealing, how about a historic drive?

**Courageous Journey: Alexandria's Black History Driving Tour** is a nine-site driving tour of African American history in Alexandria. ([More information](#)) Tour stops:

**1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In** at the Barrett Branch Library and Interpretive Panels, 717 Queen St: In 1939, the Barrett Branch Library was the main library in Alexandria. It became the site of one of the nation's earliest civil rights sit-ins, organized by local lawyer Samuel W. Tucker. Timed parking surrounds the library.

**Alfred Street Baptist Church** at Duke and Alfred Sts: This is Alexandria's oldest active historically African American congregation. Built in 1855, the brick church is a landmark in the Bottoms neighborhood, a free Black community. Street parking is along Duke and Alfred Sts.

**Edmonson Sisters Statue** at 1701 Duke St: Born into slavery, Mary and Emily Edmonson attempted escape in April 1848 aboard the schooner *Pearl*. The sisters were captured and held in bondage at the Bruin "Negro Jail" in Alexandria. Street parking is available on Reinekers Ln, and garage parking is available at 1701 Duke St. The sculpture is located directly across Duke St. from Whole Foods.

**Freedom House Museum** at 1315 Duke St: The Freedom House Museum is what remains of a large complex dedicated to trafficking thousands of Black men, women, and children from 1828-1861. Two-hour street parking is on nearby residential streets.

**Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery** at 1001 S Washington St (the corner of Church St): Between 1864 and 1869, the Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery served as the burial place for about 1,800 African Americans who fled to Union-occupied Alexandria to escape bondage. Park along the 800 block of S Washington St and walk two blocks southward or turn right and park on Church St. Note: Do not drive past Church St or you will need to take the George Washington Memorial Parkway several miles to turn around.

**Wrought, Knit, Labors, Legacies** at 1609 Cameron St (for a limited time): The sculpture "Wrought, Knit, Labors, Legacies" by Olalekan Jeyifous, frames Alexandria's African American history through the lens of the city's industrial and merchant history from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Street parking is along Cameron St, which is one way (westward).

**African American Heritage Park** at 500 Holland Ln: The African American Heritage Park is on the site of the city's oldest known independent African American burial ground, the 19th-century Black Baptist

Cemetery. The park is located at 500 Holland Ln, on the east side of Holland Ln, and just to the south of Duke St. Metered parking is on Jamieson Ave.

**Southernmost D.C. Cornerstone** Laid by Benjamin Banneker at Jones Point Park: The southern D.C. cornerstone is one of the oldest artifacts associated with the survey of the U.S. capital. African American Benjamin Banneker joined the surveying team that located the south perimeter. Walk from the parking lot at Jones Point Park down the Mount Vernon Trail to the Jones Point lighthouse. The cornerstone is in the recess of a retaining seawall east of the lighthouse.

**"The Fort" African American Community Site** at Fort Ward, 4301 W Braddock Rd: After the Civil War, a group of formerly enslaved African Americans bought land near Fort Ward and established "The Fort" community. This robust community was displaced in the 1950s. Parking is free at Fort Ward's visitor lot.

Don't feel like driving? The Manumission Tour Company specializes in the stories of Africans and African Americans in Alexandria, both enslaved and free. Most of their tours are guided walking tours, but they also offer bus tours so you can leave the driving to someone else. ([More information](#))

Safe driving!

~ Coral Childs



*Coral Childs*

## Reflections on the Calling to be a Lay Preacher at the Church of the Resurrection

My favorite Collect in the *Book of Common Prayer* is the one for Proper 28 which occurs the Sunday closest to November 16. The prayer is: *Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. AMEN*

There are many reasons which leads one to lay preaching. A love for scripture was my opening into the preaching journey. Each narrative and literary form found in the scriptures inspires me to a closer relationship with the Lord. I can still remember some of the biblical narratives from my early childhood that I heard in Sunday School classes.

My first step to lay preaching was becoming a Religious Education teacher at the beginning of the 1980's. It enriched my scripture studies. The religion books illustrated the meaning behind the biblical stories and drew both the students and teacher into a deeper reflection on the word of the Lord.

In the 1990's, I was drawn to become a Dominican Associate. Associates are encouraged to follow the

Dominican charism of prayer, study, community, and a preaching ministry. As an Associate, opportunities opened up to preach sessions on parts of scripture for both the nearby retreat house and my local associates group.

Rev. Jo suggested that I apply for a lay preacher license which I received in July 2018. This led to auditing courses at VTS, being a part of the VTS *Deep Calls to Deep* preaching program, and my current studies in Education for Ministry. In each of these steps my love of scripture and the Lord has increased.

Returning to the Proper 28 collect, I feel that it challenges each of us to delve deeper into the word of the Lord. One way which continually assists me is *lecto divino*. The basics of this practice are (1) **Read** a scripture text slowly, and notice what part of the reading, either a word or phrase, stands out to you. (2) **Ponder** the word or phrase then record just how it touches you. This can be written in your bible or a notebook. (3) Allow your pondering to gently move you into a **conversation with the Lord**.

In listening to and reflecting on our readings each Sunday, we can ask ourselves two questions: 1. What am I still hearing from the reading? 2. How does this scripture reading call me to personal growth and

action? In listening to the sermon, we might want to consider pondering some of the questions which our *Deep Calls to Deep* group reflects on. This group meets monthly. One of us gives our sermon, and then we reflect on the following questions: 1. What are you still hearing from the sermon? 2. How did the sermon flow? 3. What does the sermon call you to do? 4. How could the sermon grow?

In my lay preaching, *I have come to realize* that my appreciation of scripture evolves out of my lifelong search for a closer relationship with the Lord and trying to discover how he is working in life's joys and challenges. What *I enjoy* about lay preaching is noticing what the Lord is saying to those around me. Finding a person or persons with whom you can share scripture reflections enriches your life. Certainly, sharing scripture is sharing the love of the Lord.

Peace,

~ Linda Goff

## Reflections from General Convention

*The General Convention is the governing body of The Episcopal Church. It meets every three years—this year in Louisville.*

I attended my first General Convention (GC) in July in my role as grants administrator for the Fund for the Diaconate, which shared an exhibit booth with the Association for Episcopal Deacons. As I prepared to go to GC, I heard from several people that it was going to feel like a big family reunion.

I arrived on Friday to get oriented to the exhibit booth where I spent my days through Tuesday. Louisville had banners of a hometown hero, Mohammad Ali, and markers commemorating demonstrations to desegregate restaurants, businesses, and jobs. Near my hotel was a historic marker where Thomas Merton's [mystical experience](#) occurred in 1958. Merton recounted this in his book, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*. His words were woven through GC worship.

The Revival, a prelude to GC and separate from it, included great music, prayers for healing with anointing, and the Presiding Bishop's sermon. It was wonderful to see Bishop Curry after his months of illness. It was the only time during the week that he preached, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to be there. The Spanish interpreter did a wonderful job conveying the energy and nuance as well as the Presiding Bishop's words.

Please watch the videos of all the worship services.

The Episcopal Church's GC uses a bicameral system of decision-making. The House of Deputies includes lay and clergy members elected by each diocese. The House of Bishops includes all bishops, both active and retired.

Some decisions begin with the House of Deputies and go to the House of Bishops to vote on or send back with amendments. Some, like the vote for Presiding Bishop, begin with the House of Bishops with a request for consent from the House of Deputies. GC has its own version of reconciling the budget and resolution amendments may be reworked and renegotiated by a small group of deputies and bishops.

The full set of resolutions that GC passed are [available on the Episcopal Church's Web site](#). Of interest to us at Resurrection is one that establishes a study about how churches can best use their property, including for affordable housing. Several people I spoke with knew our story of discernment and new life.

My highlights include:

- Seeing people in person whom I have only met online.
- Reconnecting with people I have known throughout my years and ministry in the Episcopal Church,

learning about a new creation care program.

- The worship services, especially the inclusion of Episcopalians from different lands, ethnicities, and with different languages.
- Hearing support for the diaconate.
- Experiencing the healing service and the sending out of the Presiding Bishop at that service.
- The sense of excitement about the Presiding Bishop-elect, Bishop Sean Rowe. Bp. Rowe was my Church History Professor in Deacons' School.
- The energy of thousands of people who are giving their time, talent, and money to support the work of the church in the world.

It was like a big family reunion and then some. I've made new connections, given thanks to people who have made a difference in my life and ministry, and reconnected with folks I haven't seen for years. I left even more hopeful for the future of the Episcopal Church and our role as a committed, active community of faithful people who bring the love and actions of Jesus into the world.

~ Rev. Theresa



*Theresa Lewallen,  
our deacon*



Eleonora Gafton

## The importance of hydration

*But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” (John 4:14)*

Hydration is one of the most critical elements of life. Humans are made of water. Fun fact: At birth the body weight is 75% water. Water is inversely proportional to fat mass. Water plays an important role in the body, and we can't survive without it. Here are the major roles of water in the body:

- Transports glucose, oxygen, and fatty acids through the blood to muscles.
- Eliminates metabolic waste products like CO<sub>2</sub> and lactic acid in form of urine.
- Regulates body temperature by absorbing heat from muscles and dissipates it in the form of sweat.
- Helps digest food via saliva and gastric secretions.
- Lubricates joints and cushions organs and tissues.
- Nourishes the brain and the spinal cord.
- Water is where all biochemical reactions occur.

Water is not the only source of hydration.

- Many foods are a natural source of water like cabbage, celery, cucumber, grapes, melons, zucchini, and watermelon, just to name a few.

Early signs of dehydration:

- When regular routines are challenging to maintain.
- Hypotension symptoms like feeling dizzy, lightheaded, or nauseated.
- Struggle with focus, motivation, and skills.
- Dehydration brings on chills.

Best sources of water:

- Pure filtered water is the best option.
- Purified water is produced by distilled, deionization, reverse osmosis, and carbon filtration. Impurities can't exceed ten parts per million, and the water is free of contaminants and chemicals.
- Springwater: Water that flows to the surface of the earth and is collected only at the spring.
- Alkaline water is less acidic than tap water and contains compounds believed to neutralize acids in the bloodstream. However, there is no evidence supporting water with high pH is more beneficial.

There are easy options for flavored waters.

- Water, sliced cucumber, and fresh dill or basil.

- Water, citrus slices like orange, lemon, lime; add some fresh mint.

Tea is another excellent choice for hydration.

- Tea has less caffeine and is rich in flavonoids and antioxidants that help fight free radicals and reduce cardiovascular disease and cancer risk.
- The most popular tea options are ginkgo biloba, ginseng, rosehip, chamomile, echinacea, holy basil, and hibiscus.
- These teas help with weight loss, boost immunity, control appetite, aid in restful sleep, and reduce stress.
- For best results, use whole herbs rather than instant teas, which lack nutrients and are filled with sugar and artificial sweeteners.

My favorite tea during the hot summer days is tSun Tea from hibiscus flowers.

Here's how to make it:

- Place herbs in a glass vessel.
- Cover with water.
- Allow the vessel to be exposed to the sun for several (4 to 6) hours.

Blessings,

~ Eleonora Gafton

## Clergy & Staff

### Rector

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

### Deacon

[The Rev. Theresa Lewallen](#)

### Priest Associate

[The Rev. Dr. Susan Ackley Lukens](#)

### Associate Clergy

[The Rev. Katherine V. Ferguson](#)

### Director of Music

Dr. Tom Conroy

### Bookkeeper

MaryEllen Tibbs

### Parish

### Administrator

Angie Armwood

### Ministry Intern

The Rev. Jon Scarffe

### Sexton

Beltway Cleaning, Inc.

## We diaper babies

If you are a newcomer or visitor to Resurrection, you may look around at all of the “mature” faces in the church and wonder why the congregation is always talking about diapers. Lori Thurgood can tell you why!

Lori spearheads Resurrection’s diaper ministry and as she recounts its history, this is a prime example of how outreach works at Resurrection. Our first rector The Rev. Jim Green used to call it mushroom ministries. Someone sees a need, and makes a small contribution of goods, funds, or time and tells other people about it. They start to participate and before you know it, many in the congregation are involved and feeling a sense of ownership about the ministry.

David Ewing, who for some years has been our liaison with the schools in Alexandria, invited Lori to come to the Hammond School Food Fair a couple of years ago to help. The Fair just happened to have some diapers on hand, and Lori was asked to hand them out. Lori liked the sense of helping people but felt that the diaper distribution could be better organized; they never knew how many diapers they would need on any particular day. Lori felt that the diaper ministry was one she could handle, and set about organizing the diaper distribution to be a regular event, keeping records of what sizes were needed and how that matched up to the supply

Every other odd-numbered month, on the third Thursday from 4 to 6, Lori is in the Hammond School parking lot handing out packets of about 2500 diapers that Resurrection parishioners have contributed and packaged for the Fair. Lori buys the smaller sizes herself, but depends on the congregation for sizes 4, 5, and 6. Soon after one diaper distribution ends, *e-Notes* reports how many of each size are needed for the next distribution, as collection must start early.

Resurrection recognizes that diapers are expensive, so it helps to share the costs of supplying this ministry. You can bring diapers to church (check *e-Notes* to see what sizes are needed for the next distribution), you can have diapers delivered to the Church if you are someone who uses Amazon or other retailer that delivers, or you can give Resurrection a check with “diapers” in the memo line. Monies contributed to the diaper fund can be used to reimburse individuals who buy diapers in bulk. If you want to be reimbursed for your diaper purchases, [use this form](#).

Lori doesn’t need help on-site (unless maybe you speak Dari and can help translate!), but the ministry does need volunteer help:

- Large boxes of diapers are repackaged into small bags of 15 prior to each distribution date

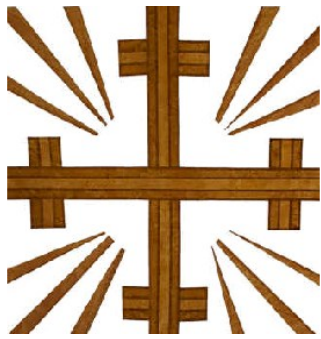


- The diapers don’t all fit into Lori’s car, so another vehicle is needed to help transport the diapers to Hammond School on Seminary Road.

David Ewing usually transports the diapers collected at church, but occasionally a substitute is needed. Lori keeps a distribution list of people who want to be involved and she sends out an e-mail alerting people who want to help whenever she has a specific need. If you want to be on this distribution list for occasional participation in this ministry, [let Lori know](#).

If you are interested in participating in other aspects of the Hammond Food Fair, bagging of food items occurs from 2:00 – 4:00 pm on the third Thursday of every month. The Fair opens to clients at 4:00 pm and runs until 6:00 pm. [David Ewing](#) can give you more information.

~ Kat Turner and  
Lori Thurgood



## Church of the Resurrection

2800 Hope Way  
Alexandria 22311-2220

## Our Shrine Mont experience

*(Continued from page 1)*

also celebrate him. Therefore, we stopped by the gift shop. Eventually, we settled on a beautiful mug. Later that night, we attended Compline and marveled on our pictures from the hike before calling it a night.

On our final day, we decided that we would attend another church's service, so we could see the outdoor church. Upon arrival, we marveled at the magnificent layout of the church. Even more so, the ringing of the bell shook our souls, alerting us to the start of the service. We ended off with another ringing of the bell and the shouting prayer. Mrs.



*(Left to right) Cheryl McBeth, Deborah xxx, Angie Armwood, Bernice and Belinda Ashitey*

McBeth took us on a final tour of parts of the campus that we had not previously seen such as the library, pavilion, and pool. As we left the upper campus, we took our final pictures before returning to pack.

We would like to thank the McBeths, Ms. Angie, and the Church for their gift and making our time at Shrine Mont memorable. :)

*~ Belinda and Bernice*

### About InSpire

InSpire is the monthly newsletter of the Church of the Resurrection, describing the people of our congregation and our faith journey together. The following individuals contributed to this issue of InSpire:

- Belinda and Bernice Ashitey
- The Rev. Jo Belser
- Betsy Faga
- Lea Fowlie, editor
- Lenore Funkhouser, photos
- Eleonora Gafton
- Linda Goff
- The Rev. Theresa Lewallen

## We made a difference

*(Continued from page 2)*

On **April 11**, 15 members of Resurrection joined 135 other VOICE members for a **Budget Accountability Action** at the Del Pepper Community Center to make sure the \$3M that was included in the Add/Delete process and that the Elbert Avenue project in the approved pipeline had what it needed to move forward. Of the three Mayoral candidates invited to participate, Councilwoman Gaskins attended. Rev. Jo co-moderated the program that was made up of speakers directly impacted by the shortage of affordable housing. Councilwoman Gaskins committed publicly to

VOICE that she *would* champion ensuring that the \$3M for affordable housing stays in the budget.

VOICE again showed up in force and spoke at the **April 13 and April 24 Add/Delete public hearings**.

On **May 2** the Alexandria City Council unanimously adopted a FY2025 budget that includes a **one-time addition of \$3 million for approved, unfunded projects in the affordable housing pipeline**.

Now here is the really great news: **Thanks in part to strong advocacy, the City has put together a financing strategy that could get the Elbert Avenue project moving**. City Council has now approved a \$3M loan

and \$350,000 grant that Community Lodging will use for local support in its upcoming application for state housing opportunity tax credits. If the application is successful, Community Lodging will use the state credits and 4% (non-competitive) tax credits and bonds to fund the project and begin construction sometime next year.

The power of VOICE became very apparent in this effort. Congratulations to all those who made it happen!

*~ Betsy Faga*