

## **The Rector's Newsletter** **Ed Kelaher, Rector**

Dear Parish Family,

There are so many things I'd like to say and the topics are so varied and intriguing. To present it all adequately would take a three-hour speech. (*No wisecracks about sermon lengths, please.*) Our Annual Parish Meeting will be on Sunday May 19, but enthusiasm prevents me from waiting. Time wouldn't allow it all anyway. So, here is a simple collection of thoughts and info that you might be interested to check out.

If you're not a reader and you simply want the bottom line, here it is. Your parish church is soaring right now. By the grace and blessing of the Holy Spirit, for which we faithfully pray daily, we are in a delightful place of oneness, unity, and harmony. The amount of ministry being conducted is inspiring. The volunteering and giving of our people are truly sacrificial and selfless. Our worship is taking new dimensions and has become more powerful and Spirit filled. We are growing very fast in spirit, discipleship, and numbers. In short, the Lord is prospering us at every turn, and we need to be humbly grateful and responsive to His leading.

Blessed be God who gives us the victory in our Lord Jesus Christ!



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## **We are Evermore Praying and Caring for God's People**

**Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.**

*James 5:14-15*

As our parish family approaches 2,000 members, we are evermore inspired and challenged to pray over them, visit them, and serve them in times of illness, crisis, or other needs. It is a huge ministry task that tests us and our resources every day. Our Deacon, BJ Buracker (*to be ordained a priest in a short number of days, God willing!*), has taken up the oversight of our Pastoral Care Ministries at this time. Joining him are Elizabeth Stuckle, who voluntarily leads our Visitation Team coordination, Paul Cauchon, who leads our weekly Prayer Meetings on Wednesdays and Sundays, and Stacey Halota and Kathleen Dillon, who lead our Healing and Prayer Ministries. The ministry and work these folks have done and continue to do is inspiring. Our volunteer visitors, prayer and healing ministers, and clergy are growing into a small army of the Lord whose mission is to love and care for those in difficulty. The ministries are not yet near the lofty goals these leaders have set, but we have seen already a giant leap in participation and effectiveness. How blessed we are to have their devotion and sacrifices. If you would like to be a part of this vital work of the Gospel, please contact the church office.



## **The Lees Head to New York City with Our Love and Blessings**

The Reverend Nathaniel Jung-Chul Lee has been called to be the next Rector of All Angels Church in Manhattan. To God be the glory! Our Associate Rector, Janna, and Zeke will be gathering themselves to serve our Lord in this new and exciting calling on their lives. They will take with them our deep love, encouragement, support, and ongoing prayers. Nate will be with us until sometime in mid-April and his first Sunday at All Angels will be May 12. Janna will finish her teaching obligations at The Latin School and the family will coordinate their move to New York throughout May and June. Look for news about a farewell reception in April and be sure to pray God's blessings, protection, and grace upon them for all they will encounter in the days ahead.

It is always sad when those we love leave us. Yet, we remember that All Saints is not about the business of raising up clergy for itself, but rather for the greater mission of God's one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church. As Rector, I am blessed to have Nate, BJ Buracker, Matthew Kozlowski, and Jonathan Musser serve with me as the faithful clergy of our parish. While one or more of them might be called to stay with us for a longer season of life, it is far more the expectation that their considerable spiritual gifts will cause the Holy Spirit to inspire each of them to serve elsewhere as time rolls along. My hope is that each will be here as long as possible because of the great joy and love they bring to us all.





## **The Kingdom Campaign – Victorious Impact for the Next Century**

**The LORD has done great things for us,  
and we are filled with joy.**

*Psalm 126:3*

Our Kingdom Campaign has been blessed by God and is a spectacular success. If you are among the Lord's faithful who have given so generously to His Kingdom mission, we thank you as we honor and give thanks for you. Your faith and sacrifice will be rewarded in many ways, not the least of which is to see God glorified as All Saints becomes an evermore powerful beacon for the Gospel of Jesus.

Through those who gave to our roof replacement, those who gave directly to our Kingdom Campaign, and through a dear parishioner who gave a very special gift through her estate, All Saints Church was provided with magnificent offerings of more than **FIVE MILLION DOLLARS!** Gifts continue to come in and those who have not been able to give so far are and will be invited to participate during the campaign's final days ending on Easter Sunday. Please join us in glorifying our Lord through this inspired initiative of giving to God's Kingdom.

Andy and Catherine Eshelman and Thomas and Holly (Morris) Espy have devoted a great part of their last 18 months to conceive, design, and execute the entire Kingdom Campaign ministry. Likewise, Stuart McFarland and Bill Garner devoted themselves to the earlier work of raising funds for our roof replacement and related building and grounds needs. Paralleling these efforts has been the years-long effort of Jonathan Stroebel, and before him Eleanor Nading, who have labored greatly behind the scenes to bring our separate annual giving to its highest level in history, powerfully enabling our day to day ministries. These incredible servants of God are owed our highest gratitude and honor for raising All Saints to its greatest position of financial strength and ministry capability ever.

This campaign work has brought greater outreach to the poor and missions, the ongoing revitalization of our beautiful church from steeple to foundation, new full-time and part-time clergy, new worship and faith building ministries, and much more. We look ahead with anticipation to several other campaign goals including, as possible, an organ renovation, further outreach and mission ministry, a new rectory for our next priest, the enlargement of our Parish Endowment, new youth ministers, safety and security enhancements, and beyond. These amazing developments, made hopeful by the gifts of our faithful parishioners, will have a divine impact for all eternity as our resources will help to bring people to the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. In this earthly realm these gifts will impact our Gospel ministry, not only for decades, but for a century and more. If nothing else, our new Buckingham slate roof has a 150-year warranty! So, there you go.

**Jesus taught, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth,  
where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.  
But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust  
destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;  
for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”**

*Matthew 6:19-21*





## An Inspired Surge of Annual Giving to the Lord

All Saints Church is our spiritual family and, just like every family, it needs to be nurtured, cared for, provided for, and protected. We can celebrate and give God glory that the Holy Spirit has blessed us by inspiring our hearts, resulting in the great sacrifices and giving of so many of our wonderful people. Our congregation has demonstrated by example our love for God and our gratitude for the forgiveness, salvation, and many blessings we receive from our Lord Jesus. The stakes are high – there are so, so many people who do not know about the eternal life to be found in Him and the grace and provisions awaiting their lives and our own here and now.

Responding to the call that we submit ourselves to change our parish culture to one of **extravagant generosity** (as Eleanor Nading called us to do when she led our giving efforts), we have seen our annual gifts to God increase by a million dollars in less than a decade – from an \$800,000+ amount to something more than \$1,800,000 this year. We thank God for raising up selfless and inspiring leaders who steadfastly and painstakingly, yet with great joy and delight, taught us the discipleship lessons necessary for us to be truly and extravagantly generous to Him. The key person to be recognized and honored in this giving ministry is our current Senior Warden, Jonathan Stroebel, who has given his heart and soul for more than 4 years to bring us to this point in our walk with God. Few know how much Jon has impacted our church on countless levels. He is a humble and inspiring servant who willingly takes on hard and thankless tasks without any attention. Supported behind the scenes by his equally humble and faithful wife, Megan, Jonathan and our Generous Giving team have done incredible amounts of ministry lifting our people in their walks as disciples of Jesus.

The long-range trajectory and plan for our parish calls for our annual giving to be at 2.1 million dollars per year. This is a number Bishop Salmon and I recognized, when I first arrived, to be the necessary amount to fully and properly operate All Saints and its ministries at full strength and deployment. As you can see, we have come a long, long way and we are almost there!

Someone once wrote that the real measure of our wealth is how much we would be worth if we lost all our money. That is so consistent with Jesus' teaching that it should be a verse of scripture. Ultimately, the only wealth we have is that which we invest in the Kingdom of God.

**“God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”**

*II Corinthians 9:8*



## **Our New Service Times – Great Benefits, Blessings, and Excitement**

September brought the beginning of our parish program year and a new line up of worship service times. Our 7:45, 9:00, and 11:15 services became 7:45, 10:00 and 10:00, with our Choral Eucharist Service and our Family Table Service being held simultaneously in separate rooms at 10 o'clock. Those changes were made after a season of intensive prayers and listening to the Holy Spirit for direction and guidance. Several concerns instigated the entire effort, including a 3-service Sunday separation or siloed nature of our people and the recognition of the decline of our late morning service, a national trend and not just an All Saints experience. In words inspired by a Christian author on the subject of church revitalization, we were "stuck" and needed to become "unstuck."

So we boldly took some risks, tried something new, and trusted God to lead us where our own thinking might have been too timid to go. The outcome of the changes we have made gives great witness and testimony to the treasure and joy to be found by taking the Holy Spirit into our hearts and following where we are led. Sundays are now even more vibrant, spirited, and exciting than we had hoped!

Our new Sunday morning format has brought a fresh and deep enrichment of the fellowship and love of our people. Our 7:45 Service continues at its constant strength, but with a new opportunity for that congregation to go directly into a discipleship class, theology class, prayer meeting, or forum immediately after. There has been a resurgence and a new spirit, power, and energy in our Choral Eucharist Service. The Family Table Service has been birthed and is quickly growing in participation and enthusiasm. And that leads us to the next topic.

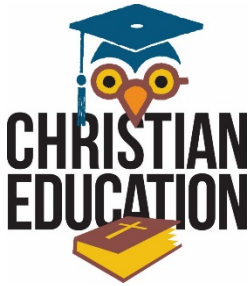


### **Our New Family Table Service is Thriving**

Our Family Table Service was launched on Sunday, December 3, meeting in our Great Hall. In a mere 2 or 3 months, this praise and worship gathering has become a magnificent addition to our worship service lineup and a new favorite for many of our people. On a low Sunday there are about 80 attending and larger Sundays bring as many as 125 – and remember that this service is in its infant stages! I have speculated several times that The Family Table might be our largest single service within two or three years. Father Matthew Kozlowski and Family Pastor Gary Wieder have prayed and worked incredibly hard, painstakingly assuring that each Sunday's worship is filled with the Holy Spirit and rich with liturgy and music. The Lord has honored and blessed their devotion and our people have responded in joy and numbers. If you have not yet attended a Family Table Service, your next chance is this coming Sunday!







## In Between Services at 9 – A New and Exciting Time

Nine o'clock Sunday has become an extraordinary time at All Saints – and not only because of Chef Glenn's wonderful continental breakfast! **All Saints University** has been founded, enriching our people in our Library with brilliant academic teaching by our parish's incredible treasure of scholars. This academic track is paralleled by a new discipleship track that has included Sunday Morning Alpha and other spiritual growth lessons presented in the Church Parlor. **The Family Forum** in Memorial Hall continues to be a truly intimate, personal, spiritually powerful, life changing, and heavily attended gathering for many. Paul Cauchon has blessed us by starting a vital **Prayer Service** in our little Prayer Room, where you may come to pray over the church, the world, and individual urgencies and concerns. All these ministries have been refreshed and blessed with wonderful attendance, participation, and spirit. The increased velocity, voltage, or pulse of Sundays at All Saints has been inspired by the Holy Spirit and the fruit of it all is clear to see.

There is one very special mentioning that must be made. Our **Sunday School** teachers have been more than magnificent for years by their holy devotion, sacrifice, and love for God and His children. How hard they prepare and ready themselves each week. The Sunday offerings for our children are more superb now than they have ever been. This also points directly to our truly special, devoted, and anointed Children's Minister, Katie Freer, who has wisely blessed us with the implementation of a fantastic new teaching curriculum.

Even with all these positives, the service time changes have caused some attendance declines for a couple of our children's classes, and that is sad. Yet, I am praying that this is something that will correct itself over the months to come. Parents need to know the great treasure awaiting them in our Sunday School as Katie and our dedicated teachers inspire our children about Jesus. It is vital to our children's faith formation that we all make the extra effort to be sure they are present each week.



## What Ever Happened to the 50+ Youth Group?

About a year ago, I began a new initiative to create a "Youth Group" for our parishioners over the age of 50. It was an inspired idea, if I say so myself. A 50+ Youth Group could bring together some of our most experienced, wise, time-rich, and impacting people. Their gatherings would be for fun, fellowship, field trips, service, mission, and more. Rome and Amy Hartman hosted a fantastic organizational evening at their home where about 60 people came to brainstorm the idea. The entire concept was a fan favorite.

So, where is it? What happened?

The better question is, what didn't happen? The 50+ Youth Group was and still is a great vision. I have no doubt that it still will come about, but my timing was clearly wrong. Obviously, I was running ahead of grace and the Spirit. I say this because the Lord did not raise up or call the necessary leaders – or the necessary leaders weren't listening or responding! That's not to say that some devoted and excited volunteers didn't offer to be helpers. They did step up and I am truly grateful to them. But we didn't experience the rising

of someone who felt inspired to lead the entire effort – a big task. We continue to await the God-called Moses types a ministry like this requires. And more than one leader is surely required. The 50+ Youth Group will happen. Maybe soon. Like a boxer looking for an opening to throw a strategic punch, we will be on the alert to take action and celebrate the leaders God will call at His perfect time. Until then, I'm praying!



## **A New Strategic Plan for a New Day**

This is a new time at All Saints because of the heightened presence of the Holy Spirit among us, new worship and educational opportunities, the inspiring sacrifices of so many volunteer servants, the success of our Kingdom Campaign and our Annual Generous Giving, the presence of new gifted clergy, the fresh energy and talent recently added to our staff, the growth of our numbers, the renovation of so much of our building, and more. We are very different than we were a short time ago.

Back in 2013, under the leadership of Stuart McFarland, Todd Miller, Richard Ranger, Dan Dever, and others, the parish adopted The Strategic Plan of 2013. Except for a couple of initiatives, the plan was executed fully by 2016. Stuart and others were about to manufacture a new strategic plan a year or so ago when the inspiration for the Kingdom Campaign became an overriding priority. The strategic plan idea was delayed accordingly and that was a very good thing because the Kingdom Campaign has changed us dramatically. We are far different and find ourselves lifted much higher along our way than we were before the campaign. A 2017 or 2018 Strategic Plan likely would have been stale by now. Recently, discussions have picked up again about the formulation of a new Strategic Plan for the near future.

The time is right for a vision to be recast by our Vestry for our Congregation's direction and ministry.