



# THE CALL

ST. ANDREW'S  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS

NO. 386  
SPRING 2020

## Deepening Our Faith



The Rev. Adrian Robbins-Cole

ONE MIGHT ASK, “Can there be life after St. Andrew’s 125th anniversary celebration?” After the celebratory service with Bishop Laura Ahrens on St. Andrew’s Day, the wonderful Gala party, and the success of the 125th anniversary Capital Campaign is 2020 just a time to congratulate ourselves for a job well done? That might be tempting, but God is waiting around the corner to welcome us to the next chapter in the life of our parish. Fresh opportunities to deepen our faith and to serve our neighbors lie before us.

Last year during the time of the 125th anniversary, I found myself reflecting on what we were celebrating. Obviously, we were celebrating the 125th birthday of our wonderful church building. As the weeks went by, however, and I read the historical snippets about the life of our parish, it became clear to me that what we were really celebrating was the 125-year experience of this congregation encountering Christ, seeking to grow in faith, and

servicing neighbors as Jesus taught. This is the fundamental *raison d’être* of our church community. So, as we enter this new chapter in the life of St. Andrew’s, my hope is that 2020 will be a year of spiritual recommitment to our faith.

To help us in this recommitment, we will launch a spiritual initiative called RenewalWorks. I first encountered the RenewalWorks program at a talk at Yale Divinity School in 2012, the year the program was launched. I had wanted to undertake it at my last parish but had received the call to come to St. Andrew’s. Last year, however, as I was reflecting on my sense that God was calling us to a spiritual recommitment to our faith to follow up the 125th Anniversary, it came to me that RenewalWorks could help give a focus to this calling.

To explore the possibility further, last October I attended a conference for those Episcopal parishes that had undertaken the program. I found that many of these parishes did feel the program helped to foster a renewed sense of spiritual growth. Indeed, the success of the program has brought increased attention to it within the Episcopal Church. On our parish annual meeting Sunday in January, the founder of RenewalWorks, the Rev. Jay Sidebotham was our guest preacher and spoke to us about the initiative. The feedback I received following Jay’s sermon has been very positive.

Parishioners involved in the program take a “spiritual inventory” survey that helps to indicate where they are in their spiritual lives.

For example, are you very much a seeker trying to work out what your beliefs are about God, or are you someone who has a very deep and close relationship with Christ, or are you somewhere in between? Now, I can imagine that some people may find the idea of doing a “spiritual inventory” survey a bit artificial or business school-like. I can understand this reaction. It is very hard to categorize something as personal, as profound, as mysterious as our spiritual life. However, I believe the questions and focus that the survey will give us outweigh any possible misgivings we may have. The individual surveys will be anonymous, and results will be given in the form of four broad categories.

The most important thing the spiritual inventory will do is start a conversation both within the parish and within the soul of each of us as individuals about our spiritual lives and our relationship with God. As Episcopalians, we are often not very good at this sort of conversation, so I hope this will provide an opening for us to have these discussions. On a different level, the survey will help the clergy have a better sense of where our parish is spiritually so that we can address our programming appropriately.

We will do the RenewalWorks spiritual life survey in September. There are only two times a year the survey can be undertaken, and the other time was too early for us. Over the summer, I will be taking a three-month sabbatical (every five to seven years Episcopal clergy are given a three-month sabbatical for

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## Deepening Our Faith *continued*

spiritual refreshment and learning). During my sabbatical I will visit parishes that have already undertaken the RenewalWorks survey and I will spend time with a spiritual mentor, Bob Logan, who has been helping parishes craft their spiritual programs once they undertake the RenewalWorks initiative.

I am excited about this initiative and the focus it will give to St. Andrew's as we renew our spiritual commitment as a parish and as individuals.

Yours in Christ,



## Warden's Message



David Hamlin, warden

HOPE 2020 is off to a wonderful start and that you are finding the Lenten season full of opportunities to reflect, pray, and strengthen your faith as we look ahead to Holy Week.

After the wonderful energy and celebrations of St. Andrew's 125th anniversary, it might seem logical to experience a bit of a letdown in 2020. However, I believe this year will be just as exciting, but for different reasons.

Most importantly, we are close to beginning the renovations and enhancements to our sanctuary. The property committee, led by Jim Blackwell and Steve Mahoney, have been hard at work since last year, researching and planning the work to be completed this summer. In addition to Jim and Steve, the committee consists of Adrian Robbins-Cole, David Hamlin, Carrie Hawley, Frank Hunnewell, Laura Brown MacKinnon, Michael Mahlenkamp, Randy Parker, and Sam Schaefer. You

will get to read more about the renovations in the next issue of The Call.

I am very excited about what we are considering, and it is a priority to keep everyone well informed about the project. Please know that the committee, vestry, and parish leadership is focused on preserving the character and history of our sacred space while also enhancing the worship experience for parishioners, the clergy, and the choir.

We had hoped to begin construction after church school ended in June, however after discussing with our construction manager the need to be back in business by Homecoming Sunday in September, we now believe we need to start construction in mid-May. It will certainly be an adventure to have Sunday worship in the parish hall. I am looking forward to this, as I often find worshiping in different settings can bring a new dimension to my faith experience.

I ask for everyone's patience and good humor as we navigate this project. If you have ideas about how to make the construction months more meaningful, please don't hesitate to pass them along to me or to Paige. I also hope we all continue to warmly welcome visitors, even in our temporary worship quarters.

Thanks to your fantastic support of the 125th anniversary Capital Campaign, we are very blessed to be able to fund the sanctuary project, which truly allows us to invest in the future of St. Andrew's, Wellesley.



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# New Life Seen Through the Poet's Eye



The Rev. Margaret K. Schwarzer

**A**FTER CHRISTIAN scripture, it is the poets who best know how to speak

of “new life.” Words are almost inadequate when we try to describe the mysterious transformation that something that has been old, broken, or dead undergoes to become, somehow, new, vital, or reborn. We see these transformations happen in the world around us, and even if words fail us, we recognize the transformation and its cause. Suddenly, someone who was alone finds a real friend; someone who is divorced finds a new partner; a childless couple is gifted with a child, either through adoption or biology. A new career emerges when an old one failed. A new understanding arrives when someone is forgiven. Wars cease; peace begins.

I believe God’s grace and love are at the heart of these life-giving new beginnings, even when we do not see God’s “fingerprints” outright. As Carl Jung once wrote: “Bidden or not bidden, God is present.” Here are poems from two poets who would agree.

The first is Gerard Manley Hopkins, a Victorian priest and poet who lived and wrote in the last half of the nineteenth century. His poem, *God’s Grandeur*, written in 1877, responds to the Industrial Revolution’s new and ugly blight on the English landscape. Hopkins’ poem insists that God’s transforming grace is larger still.

## God’s Grandeur

*The world is charged with the grandeur of God.  
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;  
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil  
Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod?  
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;  
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil  
And wears man’s smudge and shares man’s smell: the soil  
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.  
And for all this, nature is never spent;  
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;  
And though the last lights off the black West went  
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs —  
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent  
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.*  
—Gerard Manley Hopkins

MARY OLIVER, a poet of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, was mesmerized by the life of the spirit. Her work insists that we recognize how new life often requires us to first accept the sharp pain of letting go of the old. Oliver, like Hopkins, was fascinated by the way the natural world reveals God’s transforming ways, but she felt a fierce emptying was required before new life arose. In *Blackwater Woods*, she wrote:

*To live in this world  
you must be able  
to do three things:  
to love what is mortal;  
to hold it  
against your bones knowing  
your own life depends on it;  
and, when the time comes to let it go,  
to let it go.* —Mary Oliver

THE SEASON OF LENT AND EASTER asks us to engage our own lives with the hope of Gerard Manley Hopkins and the fierce honesty of Mary Oliver. I invite you to consider these two poems and how they speak to you in our 40-day journey through Lent, our Holy Week pilgrimage, and our Easter arrival. Godspeed as the wisdom of both works unfolds in your life.



Photo: Peter B. Lull



# We Begin Again



The Rev. Maria (Mia) Kano

**F**OR ME, LENT HAS ALWAYS been intertwined with the legacy and impact of the monks of the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE). When I was first exploring the Episcopal faith in the spring of 2015, I followed a Lenten devotional called *A Season for the Spirit* by the former SSJE monk Martin L. Smith. His expression of the vulgarity and solidarity of God's incarnation among us, his invitation to an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit, irrevocably altered the course of my life. Smith writes,

*The home of the Spirit is not in the intellect, the realm of concepts and idea, not in a refined interior sanctum of spirituality but in*

*the guts, the deep core where our passions have their spring, the place of conflict, confusion, vulnerability, and desire. . . Finding the Spirit of God in my life was not a matter of looking for something I had never had. It was a matter of actively uncovering through faith a Presence in the depth of my being that had been there all along.*

That Lent was the beginning of my journey into seeking intimacy with God even in the mundanity of daily living. It is a journey that led to my ordination here in the Episcopal Church in January.

However, before that could happen, SSJE had still more to teach me. The following Lent, I led an adult education program using *Growing a Rule of Life* published by SSJE and Virginia Theological Seminary. Using this program, we investigated the values and relationships that form the core of our faith. We also committed to the daily, weekly, and seasonal practice of a rule of life that keeps those values, relationships, and faith centered in our lives. We discovered that the practice of keeping a "rule of life" enables a sense of new beginnings to imbue our lives, even when we are not experiencing big transitions.

This was, of course, John McQuiston's point in titling his contemporary interpretation of the St. Benedict rule of life *Always We Begin Again*. Benedictine spirituality reminds us to take each day in turn as a fresh, new opportunity to be who God calls us to be. The Alcoholics Anonymous prayer, "Just for Today," and AAs' famous twelve-step spirituality have their roots in the Benedictine Rule of Life. In fact, the Rev. Sam Shoemaker, an Episcopal priest, introduced the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous to St. Benedict's twelve steps of humility from his Rule of Life.

I still read *A Season for the Spirit* each Lent, and every time the wisdom of Smith's incarnational theology and Benedictine spirituality hits me in a new way. I form a new Rule of Life each time I experience new beginnings in my life. I still visit the monastery in Cambridge to make my confession to a monk on Good Friday. This Lent I offer these resources to you: Smith's, *A Season for the Spirit*; SSJE's, *Growing a Rule of Life*; and McQuiston's, *Always We Begin Again*. All three are beautiful ways into the Benedictine spirituality that opens new beginnings for us in each and every day.



Photo: Sandra Rigney

# Rev. Maria (Mia) Kano and her Ordination



Betsy Millane

**T**HE FIRST THING you should know about Mia now that she has been ordained is that she prefers to be addressed as either Mia or Rev. Mia.

Now you know.

## The Journey

Mia has been on the journey to ordination for a long time. She grew up in Fairfield, Connecticut with her parents, who were raised in the Irish Catholic tradition. Initially, her family split their Sundays between her mother's Congregationalist church and her father's Catholic church. Around 2000, Mia's father began to feel that his job was creating a moral crisis in himself that his Catholic church could not help him address. He left Catholicism for his wife's Congregational church and became a high school mathematics teacher, where he felt spiritually and vocationally fulfilled.

Mia found a role model in the Rev. Dr. Alida Ward, her minister at the Congregational church. From an early age, "probably nine years old," Mia says, she wanted to be like Ward, who was "filled with unconditional love for everyone she encountered." To Mia, Ward's job "was the coolest job" she could imagine having. During her high school internship under Ward, she relished the fact that "every day was different, and it was so much about people. I recognized that

God had given me great gifts that lent themselves to this [vocation]."

## A Pivotal Moment

To Mia, September 11, 2001, was a shattering event. She was 11 years old, the World Trade Center had crumbled before her eyes, and it seemed to her that "adults didn't know what was going on." Determined to understand, she "asked for a Qur'an for Christmas" and went on to study Arabic and Islam in college.

## More Tests

Mia says she was tested over and over again. While in college, she lost her faith first "intellectually, as God didn't make sense," then emotionally. She "lost all her habits of faith" and felt a "bodily disconnect with that faith." In her junior year of college, she became a "humanist-atheist." As a humanist and Fulbright Scholar, she worked in Jordan after college, studying women's rights in Islam, and working on interfaith relations with military chaplains. The Rev. Noah Evans, who interviewed her via Skype for an internship, didn't believe her faith was gone and hired her to work at Grace Episcopal Church in Medford through Life Together, a social justice internship program of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.

## The Return of Faith

Mia says her faith returned at Grace Church in Medford, where she came to the Eucharist on her knees and felt God meet her "at the altar."

Looking back on her time as a humanist atheist, Mia notes that she had desperately wanted to believe in God during this period, as "life would have been so much easier." She sees that time as vital because she "needed it to clear away her 'childlike' relationship with God." Now she can see how God worked with her to rebuild a



All photos for this article: Peter B. Lull

firm foundation of faith from the ground up.

She knows absolutely that faith is a gift from God through the Holy Spirit, and she is grateful to the Episcopal Church for helping her back in and recognizes that what she experienced is "grace, undeserved, unearned."

## Moving Forward

The week before her ordination, I asked Mia if she was excited. She said "excited. . . and a lot of other things." She told me her ordination was the culmination of "two decades of yearning." She felt joyful, grateful, to those who had helped her, and relieved that the years of testing were over, that her

*continued on the next page*







“life was coming together,” and that now she could do “what I had wanted to do.”

It took five years for Mia to complete the steps she had to take before ordination. As an aspirant, she had to face a discernment committee who questioned her calling. Looking back, she says “everyone in their twenties should have a discernment committee, which consists of six people from different backgrounds who help you to figure out what you should do with the gifts God gives you!” The second step is postulancy, which precedes ordination and lasts for two years. During this time the postulant works in various ministries while attending seminary. The

third step is candidacy and then ordination.

#### **Ordination**

Mia personally selected the music for her ordination and the processional hymn, “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing,” was of special importance to her. She found the line “Oh, to grace how great a debtor...” to be particularly significant as she feels grace is such a gift and because it was Grace Episcopal Church that brought her back to Christ.

She chose the Gospel, Matthew 3:13-17, the baptism of Jesus, because she feels “we are called to this journey of faith through this baptism.”

The last blessing of the program was “very significant” to Mia. It

was, she said, “a gift to Alida” as it was a blessing Ward had used at the end of every Sunday service of Mia’s childhood.

When Ward, who was in the front pews, realized this, she teared up, as did Mia.

Through marriage, Mia is related to the Rev. Hiram Hisanori Kano, who transformed his imprisonment in U.S. internment camps during World War II into a mission field. He was made a saint in the Episcopal church in 2012. As part of the ordination, Father Kano was invoked as one of the saints.

#### **What Comes Next?**

Mia is inspired and passionate about the work she is doing. Her mentors keep her “thriving,” she says. She feels that God “is alive” when she prays and reflects, and when she writes sermons, she feels herself drawing close to God. Thus, the first sermon is often the one she writes for herself and “the second is for others.” She has gotten into the habit of “carrying the scripture through the day for God helps her to see things” she hasn’t seen.

She particularly loves working with children and the church school. One of her goals is to “help people of all ages to discover how Jesus reveals himself through prayers that are meaningful to individuals. “As priests, we empower people,” she says. “Our society has become generationally segregated, and church is a place where all can come together.”

When asked about the future, she hesitates because, as she says, she can’t say where God will take her. Still, she says she would like to stay at St. Andrew’s for as “long as you will have me!”

Throughout Mia’s ordination, I felt that the entire congregation embraced Mia and reveled in her journey. We shouted the responses. I told Mia later, “After seeing you at the altar I thought, ‘I want to hug you!’ Then I realized we all did!”



# Calendar

## March 2020

### Sunday, March 15

9am Christian Learning  
9am Girl Scout My Faith, My Promise  
9:45am Kids' Place, Church School, & Rite-13  
10am Holy Eucharist and Scout Sunday  
11:30am Church School Bake Sale

### Tuesday, March 17

7pm Book Circle

### Wednesday, March 18

6:30pm Lenten Potluck & Program

### Thursday, March 19

9:30am Altar Guild Meeting  
11am Holy Eucharist at North Hill

7pm Altar Guild Meeting

### Friday, March 20

7pm Parents' Circle

### Sunday, March 22

9am Christian Learning  
9:45am Kids' Place, Church School, & Rite-13

5pm Confirmation Class Eucharist

5:30pm Confirmation Class

6:45pm High School Youth Group

### Tuesday, March 24

5pm Dinner Volunteers at Pearl Street Cupboard & Café  
7:30pm Vestry Meeting

### Wednesday, March 25

5:45pm Pre-K to 3rd Grade Youth Sunday Preparation  
6:30pm Lenten Potluck & Program  
7:15pm 4th Grade to Confirmation Youth Sunday Preparation

### Sunday, March 29

9am Christian Learning  
9:30am Church School, Rite-13, & Confirmation Youth Sunday Preparation  
9:45am Kids' Place Only  
10am Holy Eucharist Youth Sunday  
11:30am Firearm Safety Task Force



Photo: Rob Brandt

## April 2020

### Wednesday, April 1

6:30pm Lenten Potluck & Program

### Thursday, April 2

9:45am Church School Committee

### Friday, April 3

*Pre-Confirmation Retreat*

### Saturday, April 4

8am Men's Bible Study

### Sunday, April 5

*Palm Sunday*

8am Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist

9am Coffee Hour for 8am Worshipers

9:45am Kids' Place, Church School & Rite-13 Special Program

10am Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist

### Monday, April 6

7:30pm Taizé-style Service

### Tuesday, April 7

7:30pm Stations of the Cross

### Wednesday, April 8

7pm Bible Circle

7:30pm Service of Tenebrae

### Thursday, April 9

*Maundy Thursday*

5:30pm Maundy Thursday Family Seder & Potluck

6:30pm Senior Choir

7:30pm Maundy Thursday with Foot Washing

9pm Maundy Thursday Vigil

### Friday, April 10

*Good Friday*

12pm Good Friday Liturgy

2pm Good Friday Children's Service and Hot Cross Buns

7:30pm Good Friday Liturgy

### Saturday, April 11

*Holy Saturday*

9am Holy Saturday Service

7:30pm Great Vigil of Easter and Holy Eucharist

### Sunday, April 12

*Easter Sunday*

8am Senior Choir

9am Easter Sunday Family Festival Holy Eucharist

9am Kids' Place Only (No Church School or Rite-13)

10am Easter Egg Hunt

11am Easter Sunday Festival Holy Eucharist

### Monday, April 13

*Easter Monday — Parish Office Closed*

### Tuesday, April 14

9:15am Pastoral Care Team

10:30am Bible Circle

7:30pm Outreach Committee

### Wednesday, April 15

7pm Bible Circle

### Thursday, April 16

11am Holy Eucharist at North Hill

### Sunday, April 19

NO Kids' Place, Church School, Rite-13

9am Christian Learning

### Monday, April 20

*Patriots Day — Parish Office Closed*

### Tuesday, April 21

7pm Book Circle

7:30pm Vestry Meeting

### Sunday, April 26

9am Christian Learning

9:45am Kids' Place, Church School & Rite-13 Community Service Learning

10am Holy Baptism & Holy Eucharist

11:30am Bargain Haul Drop-Off Sunday

5pm Confirmation Class Eucharist

5:30pm Confirmation Class

6:45pm High School Youth Group

### Monday, April 27

9am Bargain Haul Drop-Off

6pm Bargain Haul Drop-Off

7:30pm Finance Committee

### Tuesday, April 28

9am Bargain Haul Drop-Off

5pm Dinner Volunteers at Pearl Street Cupboard & Café

### Thursday, April 30

9am Bargain Haul Worker's Sale



## May 2020

### Friday, May 1

6pm Parish Night

### Saturday, May 2

8am Bargain Haul Public Sale

### Sunday, May 3

9am Coffee Hour for 8am Worshipers

9:45am Kids' Place, Church School, & Rite-13

10am Holy Baptism & Holy Eucharist

### Tuesday, May 5

7:30pm Worship Committee

### Wednesday, May 6

7:30pm Men's Book Club

### Thursday, May 7

9:45am Church School Committee

### Saturday, May 9

8am Men's Bible Study

### Sunday, May 10

*Last Sunday worshiping in sanctuary*

9am Christian Learning

9:45am Kids' Place, Church School, & Rite-13

10am Holy Baptism & Holy Eucharist

5pm Confirmation Celebration

Eucharist

6pm Confirmation Class End of Year Party

6:45pm High School Youth Group

### Monday, May 11

*Sanctuary closed for renovations until Labor Day*

### Tuesday, May 12

9:15am Pastoral Care Team

10:30am Bible Circle

7:30pm Outreach Committee

### Wednesday, May 13

7pm Bible Circle

### Sunday, May 17

*First Sunday service in parish hall*

9am Christian Learning

9:45am Kids' Place, Church School, & Rite-13

10am Holy Eucharist with Holy Communion Prep. Recognition

### Tuesday, May 19

7pm Book Circle

### Thursday, May 21

*Ascension Day*

9:15am Altar Guild Ascension Day Service

9:45am Altar Guild Meeting

11am Holy Eucharist at North Hill

### Sunday, May 24

NO Kids' Place, Church School, Rite-13

9am Christian Learning

### Monday, May 25

*Memorial Day — Parish Office Closed*

7:30pm Finance Committee

### Tuesday, May 26

5pm Dinner Volunteers at Pearl Street Cupboard & Café

7:30pm Vestry Meeting

### Thursday, May 28

7:30pm Stewardship Committee

### Sunday, May 31

*Pentecost*

9:45am Kids' Place, Church School, & Rite-13



Photo: Rob Brandt

## June 2020

### Wednesday, June 3

7:30pm Men's Book Club

### Thursday, June 4

9:45am Church School Committee

11:30am Altar Guild Luncheon

### Saturday, June 6

8am Men's Bible Study

### Sunday, June 7

9am Coffee Hour for 8am Worshipers

9am Church School Teachers' Meeting

9:45am Kids' Place, Church School & Rite-13

10am Holy Eucharist Teacher Appreciation

### Tuesday, June 9

9:15am Pastoral Care Team

7:30pm Outreach Committee

### Tuesday, June 16

7pm Book Circle

### Thursday, June 18

11am Holy Eucharist at North Hill

### Monday, June 22

7:30pm Finance Committee

### Tuesday, June 23

5pm Dinner Volunteers at Pearl Street Cupboard & Café

7:30pm Vestry Meeting

### Thursday, June 25

7:30pm Stewardship Committee

### Saturday, June 29 through Saturday, July 4

*Summer Youth ASP Mission Trip*

.....  
**Parish Register** *Baptisms* Dininar Alpers, Michael Alpers, Grace Vera Gaede, Vivien Katarina Kivett, Kai Prescott MacAusland, and Charlotte Muriel Young. *Burials* William Peter Barrack, Mary Pegg, Paul Tedesco, and Sue Wright O'Sullivan.  
 .....

The **Sunday Holy Eucharist** is celebrated at 8am, 10am and 5pm (except where noted). The **Holy Eucharist** is also celebrated every Wednesday at 7:30am. All are welcome! **Silent Contemplative Prayer** is offered Monday through Friday at 8:50am. **Senior Choir** has rehearsal every Thursday evening at 7:30pm and every Sunday at 9am, unless otherwise noted. **Junior Choir** meets every Sunday at 9am, unless otherwise noted. **Parish office hours** are Monday through Thursday 9am to 5pm and Fridays 9am to 12 noon, and **staff meetings** are Wednesdays at 9:30am. **Please note:** there will be some changes/additions and the most up-to-date calendar is found on the website.



# Signs of Lent



Cynthia Scott

**S**IMILAR TO ADVENT, LENT is a season of reflection and preparation, and during both seasons we use purple (or violet) altar hangings. Purple is a penitential color; it is also associated with royalty and subtly points us toward the resurrection. We at St.

Andrew's are fortunate to have two sets of purple hangings: the altar frontal we use for Advent is decorated with gold embroidery and rose banding, while the Lenten one is unadorned, its austerity reflecting the penitential season.

There are more signs of the solemnity of Lent. . . No flowers on the altar. We don't sing or say the Gloria and the Lenten hymns are more somber. Our decorative processional cross is replaced with a smaller, simpler one. Our brass candlesticks and brass altar book stand are replaced with iron candlesticks and a wooden stand. The ashes placed on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday represent our own mortality. These Lenten symbols serve to remind us that we are entering a period of prayer and spiritual renewal.



Photos: Sandra Rigney



## Getting to Know Amanda Kern



Amanda Kern

**T**O PROVIDE THE PARISH with an opportunity to learn a little more about our members, our leaders, and our staff, the Call continues its series of conversations with the people of St. Andrew's. In this tenth article, we meet Amanda Kern, St. Andrew's youth and children's choir director. —Dan Dent

### What brought you to St. Andrew's?

Before joining St. Andrew's in 2008, I was the choral and musical theater director at Franklin

High School for six years. After the district made cuts to the music program, I applied to a position at St. Andrew's, which felt like a great fit. In college, I had majored in music and spent much of my time at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Columbia, South Carolina, as a section leader and directing the children's choir. St. Andrew's has now been my church home for 12 years, and I have enjoyed working with our families and children through music.

### Where did you grow up?

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. I received a Bachelor of Music in opera and voice performance from the University of South Carolina, in Columbia. I then moved to Massachusetts to do graduate studies at Boston University and have been here ever since.

### What's your typical week like at the church and elsewhere?

Before my children were born, I was the middle and upper school music teacher at the International

School of Boston, in Cambridge, but now my biggest job is being our family manager and mom to Lucy, our five-year-old, and Scott, our two-year-old. My work at St. Andrew's keeps me busy on Wednesdays and Sundays. On Wednesdays we meet as a staff, and then Wardie and I take part in weekly liturgy planning meetings with Adrian, Margaret, and Mia. Wednesday is my day to check in with staff and clergy and to do planning and preparation for the junior choir and church school.

On Sundays we are focused on the congregation and all of the families here at the church. My morning starts with the junior choir, and then I provide music programming for Kids' Place and church school classes during the 10am service. Once a month, the junior choir sings in the service. When I have time, or Wardie needs an extra soprano, I enjoy singing with the senior choir. I am also active in my home community as the conductor of the Carlisle Community Chorus, and I am in my third year as music director of the Carlisle seventh grade play. I couldn't do this all without my loving husband, David, who is so supportive and a wonderful co-ringmaster to our joyful family circus!

### What's your fondest memory of working at the church?

I love working with the children and watching them learn and grow musically and spiritually over the years. Our annual Grace Knight Babson presentation is always a lot of fun, but I think my most favorite memory was when the children's chapel was turned into an incredible pirate ship. I led a crew of pirates who sang, danced, and inspired our young campers at the high seas-themed vacation Bible school.



Photo: Courtesy Amanda Kern



### What's it like to teach music to children and adults?

I like the fact that as the junior choir director and the director of children's music I get to build relationships over the course of years with the kids. I enjoy sharing my skill set with the children and adults I work with. It's a special gift. I think making music and singing is core to being human. It's something we all can do from our first breath and something that should be nurtured because each and every voice is unique and a

special gift from God. I find it a gift to be able to nurture that and help people in their own journey with their voices.

### If you had a free month away from work, where would you go?

Italy. David and I went on a Rick Steves tour to Italy early in our marriage, and it's one of those places we long to go back to one day. Our favorite places were Venice, Sienna, and Varenna on Lake Como. The food, the music, and the culture are just amazing.

### What else should we know about making music at St. Andrew's?

The most important thing to remember is that everyone has a voice and that learning to love your voice and to find joy in using it is a process. No matter your skill level, Wardie, our incredible section leaders, and I are here to help you on your musical journeys. Singing together with other people is good for your personal well-being, and science says singing is actually beneficial to your health. So come and join our choirs! All are welcome.

## Church Renovations Underway this Summer

**T**HE LAST MAJOR RENOVATION TO THE CHURCH INTERIOR spaces took place 25 years ago, and plans are underway to give it a fresh look.

This summer the sanctuary, transept chapel, children's chapel, and narthex will be upgraded from a property replacement reserve funded by the 125th capital campaign. All of this work will be done as one project during the summer break.

The scope of work in the worship spaces includes painting all of the spaces, refinishing the floors, repairing pews, and recovering the kneelers. In addition, the lighting system will be upgraded to enhance illumination and

take advantage of newer energy-saving technologies. We plan to improve our sound system, and air conditioning is also under consideration.

Making the narthex a more welcoming entrance to our church will be an important part of the project with much more attractive woodwork, better lighting, flooring, and a new door.

Our plan is for work to begin after May 10, 2020 giving us enough time to complete these projects by September. Services will be held in the parish hall during the construction.

## St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Officers, and Staff

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# ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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# THE CALL

