

PLANNED RENOVATIONS TO THE SACRISTY AND VESTING ROOM WILL SUPPORT OUR FLOWER AND ALTAR GUILDS:

The CONNECTED Capital Campaign will make it possible for the sacristy to be renovated and the flower guild to have its own dedicated space in the vesting room so that these two vital ministries – Flower Guild and Altar Guild – have more work space and better storage.

But... What exactly is the sacristy? And where is it? What does the altar guild actually do? Why do people volunteer for this ministry? And what about the flower guild? Do you have to be a floral designer to volunteer for the flower guild? Never fear, gentle reader! We have the answers to all of these questions and more. Read on!

The Sacristy:

The sacristy is officially described by the Episcopal church as being located “usually to the side of the chancel area” and being the place “where the Eucharist bread and wine are kept when not being used along with clergy vestments and parish records.”

At Saint James’ the sacristy is on the Gospel side of the church. It is the room to the left of the altar from the congregation’s perspective and to Jesse’s left when he is playing the organ. The sacristy is also the room where lots of interesting things are stored like colorful vestments, gleaming silver, communion wafers, wine, floral tape, a needle and thread, scissors, and likely a few dried up palm crosses. It is a place where funny stories of grace and forgiveness after things went wrong during the service start and end. In short, the sacristy is a place where people experience ministries that gift them with a rare window into both the majesty and the serenity of God. It is a place where guild members can encounter Jesus while touching and preparing holy things.

The Altar Guild:

“And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do.” (BCP, p. 366)

The Altar Guild is a ministry of service that has its roots in the historical Hebrew tradition of the Levites. In the early days of the Church the duty of caring for the altar and sanctuary was the concern of the priests and attendants. In certain parts of the world nuns do this work but, for many years in most churches, these duties have been performed by a group of women, and more recently men, known as the Altar Guild.

Following the procedures and traditions of the Church, the Altar Guild functions “behind the scenes” before and after each service polishing the silver and brass, washing and ironing the linens, and preparing the sanctuary for worship. In doing so, they are the priests’ partners in making the worship life of the parish run smoothly. During Christmas, Holy Week, and Easter, the Altar Guild works even harder to support many special services.

For Altar Guild members like Connie Nash, serving on the Altar Guild provides a wonderful opportunity for spiritual growth through humble service.



Saint James': Connie, how many years have you been a parishioner?

Connie Nash: I have been a member for 30 years

SJ: What sets Saint James' apart? How would Fauquier County be different without Saint James'?

CN: Saint James' feeling of inclusiveness-both within the church and more and more within the community is what I believe sets Saint James' apart. In fact, inclusiveness is a tradition of this church that dates back to supporting the troops during the Civil War and continues today through our present preschool learning initiative, Learning Starts Early.

SJ: How would Fauquier County be different without Saint James'?

CN: Without Saint James' our community would lose a vibrant school and a preschool which have both nourished many of our younger citizens. The Free Clinic would lose support as would the children involved with Social Services.

We reach many people in many different ways that are not always obvious but which are so vital to those involved. We bring God and his message to many through weddings, baptisms and funerals.

SJ: What are Saint James' biggest strengths?

CN: Everyone working together for the same goals is our greatest strength. We are also blessed with a very dedicated clergy, choir director, head of school, and staff.

SJ: What impresses you most about the church?

CN: Its historical presence, its beauty, but most of all how it has never wavered from its true mission of bringing the word and love of God to all people at all times. I am very proud of our PreK-5th grade School Program and our Sunday School because without them it would be much harder for our church to grow and prosper.

SJ: What impresses you most about the church?

CN: First I am most impressed by how Saint James' is always looking for more ways of reaching out and being more welcoming. I am also quite impressed by the depth of talents that we have among our members and everyone's generosity in sharing those talents.

SJ: Tell us... Why the altar guild?

CN: I feel more connected to the traditions of our church and their meanings when I am serving and doing my small part in supporting its missions.

SJ: What are you most looking forward to with the planned renovations?

CN: Definitely the sacristy renovation. It will be wonderful to have enough room to work and store items properly and equally wonderful that there will be a separate place for the flower guild to work on their ministry.

I am also quite excited about the planned elevator and accessibility improvements. More people who need closer parking will be able to have it since they will be able to park in the church lot and use the ramps and elevator to access the nave and the parish hall.

SJ: What makes you hopeful and happy?

CN: Being a member of such a vibrant church that really has it all together makes me hopeful and happy. I am also grateful for our true sense of community and for the way the capital campaign has genuinely tried to reach out to all people to see what the needs are.

If you would enjoy the opportunity to learn more about the elements and symbolism of our liturgy, and serve our Lord and his church behind the scenes, in a quiet yet very important way, the Altar Guild might be for you.

Please contact Penny Dart at apdart@gmail.com for more information.

The Flower Guild:

*The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.
-Isaiah 40:8 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)*

Throughout the ages flowers have been an important part of many of the world's religions. In ancient Egypt large floral displays were popular offerings to the Gods. In Medieval times, flowers were used in monasteries to ward off spirits, and floral art adorned the margins of illuminated manuscripts and stained glass windows. In the Renaissance, flowers depicted religious art. The Victorian era established the use of flowers in daily life, and floral design was taught for home and church. Greek, Dutch, Asian and French cultures also contributed floral designs which are sometimes the basis of present day arrangements in churches, synagogues and other places of worship.

The mission of Saint James' Flower Guild is to enhance worship services and glorify God by sharing its creative gifts to adorn the sanctuary. Its ministry is to joyfully present to God offerings of natural beauty. The Flower Guild decorates the altar and chapel for weekly services and for special events during the church year--Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, and Pentecost. Members of the Flower Guild also create and place flower arrangements on the altar for weddings and funerals. It is our tradition in the Episcopal Church to use fresh flowers which both adds a sense of celebration and also serves as a metaphor for life.

Flower Guild members like Bonnie Zacherle want their flower arrangements to reflect the beauty and abundance of God's creation.



Saint James: Bonnie, why don't you start by telling us a little bit about yourself?

Bonnie Zacherle: I was an Army brat, having moved frequently most of my life. After college I moved to the Boston area. In Boston I was a greeting card artist and toy and game designer. I moved to Virginia almost 20 years ago to be closer to my brother's family who lived in Culpeper. Today I am illustrating children's books and teaching art.

SJ: What are you most passionate about? Why?

BZ: I am most passionate about Saint James' Church and School. I consider the Parish my extended family. I love the children in the School as though they were my own.

SJ: How did you first hear about/come to Saint James'

BZ: I drove past the church, saw that it was an Episcopal Church, and later snuck in the back of the church where I was met by Ginny Vawter and Carrie Smith who invited me to coffee hour. I never left.

SJ: How many years have you been a parishioner?

BZ: I have been a member for 20 years.

SJ: What sets Saint James' apart? How would Fauquier County be different without Saint James'?

BZ: Saint James' is the most welcoming church I have ever attended. The clergy is dedicated as is the congregation; a nice mix of young and old. The music program is consistently outstanding. The Church would be greatly missed in Fauquier. Parishioners are leaders in the community. The Church is involved in many outreach programs which benefit the town and the county.

SJ: What are Saint James' biggest strengths?

BZ: Saint James' members are the friendliest most generous people I have ever known. The Church is vital and very active in the community, reaching out to many of the neediest population.

SJ: What impresses you most about the church?

BZ: The people, the clergy, the building, the history, the music, not necessarily in that order.

SJ: Tell me something the church does that stands out for you.

BZ: The Church and School are currently involved in the preschool initiative, Learning Starts Early, which hopes to make a difference in the futures of needy children in Fauquier. That is a standout to me.

SJ: Tell us... Why the flower guild?

BZ: The Flower Guild is an enjoyable way of giving back to God what he has given to us: the beauty of nature.

SJ: What are you most looking forward to with the planned renovations?

BZ: I cannot wait for the Flower Guild Room!

SJ: What makes you hopeful and happy?

BZ: The energy of all of the people at Saint James' - young and old – makes me happy. I am also very happy about the progress we will make when we add the new classroom spaces for the school. Knowing the renovations will make the church accessible to everyone is also a great thing to look forward to.

SJ: Is there anything else you'd like to add that we haven't touched on?

BZ: The Flower Guild is always looking for new members who enjoy arranging flowers for the Lord's table. We don't have many meetings, we just have fun with flowers! Contact the parish office if you would like to join us.

If you would enjoy arranging flowers into attractive containers for the church altar, have a love of beauty and an interest in expressing it, then the Flower Guild might be for you.

Please contact Nancy Kincheloe at nancy@saintjameswarrenton.org for more information.

Thank you, Connie and Bonnie, for telling us about yourselves and
for keeping us
CONNECTED!