

Christian Education at St. Andrew's

By

Vicki Mooza Lanier



This month we focus on the multiple programs that have involved our youth. This takes me back to my childhood and extends throughout my life.

When I was a child, there were so many activities held at our church that most weekdays I found myself coming "home" here. We were always welcomed by Miss Eleanor Mabry for Youth Choir, Scouts, Y-Teens, and even personal use of the stage for the productions we dreamed up. As my family attended church on Sundays, I also wanted to

be in the "Big Church" with them and go to the altar as it seemed an important part of what was going on. Alas... the waiting continued until I finally convinced Mr. Burke by memorizing the creeds that I was ready for Confirmation. What a fortunate childhood to be able to walk to such a rich variety of Love!

The Junior Choir began before the youngest could read and I was there with a strong desire to sing. My friends and I especially loved our choir teacher, Miss Abbitt (now known in our congregation as Betty Hayes), and loved her red convertible. We often rode our bikes by her house on Botetourt Road trying to get a peek at her. When practicing for the Christmas Evensong service, I was certain that the words for "In Excelsis Deo" were... "Speedy Alka Seltzer". While I practiced singing at home, my parents tried to convince me otherwise, but NO, I was certain that "my choir teacher" had taught me correctly and my parents endured hearing my strong voice singing "Speedy Alka Seltzer" on Sunday evening.

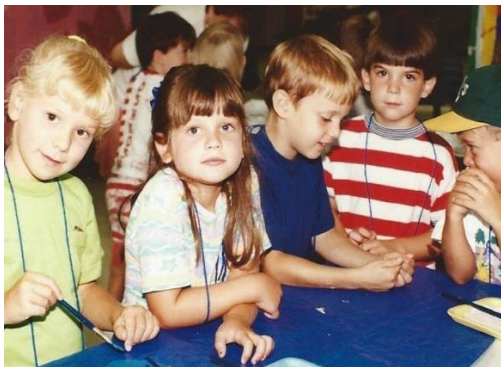
In 1975, I found myself living back in Newport News with my husband and two children. We began attending St. Andrews again. Church programs were abundant and the Day School was filled with children and activity. Our daughter Laura attended first grade there and later our son Robbie also attended. We continued to experience an abundance of love, spiritual formation (then we called it

Christian Education), pastoral care, and quality education from the church and school just I had received as a child. In fact, my children had my first grade teacher, Mrs. Evelyn Davis. We laughed as she retired after Robbie's year, thinking perhaps that was enough!

With flourishing Christian education programs for children and adults, the Vestry approved funding for the first full-time staff member for Christian education. In 1981, Ann Smith was hired as Minister of Christian Education. She brought spiritual direction and many creative activities to our church. Ann, with the leadership of Patricia Woodbury, also introduced Liturgical Dance to our congregation. We experienced additional growth as our staff person developed and implemented new ideas. After a busy and successful few years, Ann was tragically injured in a car accident and couldn't return to her job.

As Chairperson of the Christian Education Committee, I left my teaching job with Newport News Public Schools and joined the staff at St. Andrews in 1989 as the next Minister of Christian Education. Working with the church staff, led by the Reverend Doug Burgoyne and Assistant Rector Peter Edwards-Jenks, was indeed, an honor of my life. The Reverend Peter Edwards-Jenks focused on the youth ministry with an active Episcopal Youth Community (EYC). Minister of Music Brad Norris, Financial Administrator Joyce Safford, Parish Secretary Leila Hine, and I found group creativity, support, and empowerment.

On Sunday mornings, children in all grades through high school filled the building. We had multiple offerings for adults. Creating special services with the Liturgy Planning committee allowed children and adults to participate in a variety of experiential ways such as Riding a Donkey on Palm Sunday, creating Advent Wreaths, Spiritual dance while creating a May Pole, and Clowning at the Outdoor service.



We continued to support and offer more programs: BRICKS (Boosting Reading in Community Churches with Kids) partnering with Hilton Elementary school for an after school reading program; Education For Ministry (EFM) extensive study of Christianity developed and supported by Sewanee Theological Seminary; Koinonia small group Christian fellowship community; Singles Group; and Vacation Bible School with the Hilton area churches hosted by St. Andrew's and Hilton Presbyterian Church in which many ecumenical relationships were

nurtured and continue today. An offshoot of this collaboration was the production of a Youth Drama, "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat" which toured the state after successful local performances. One of our star performers was Allie (Lee) Wittkamp.

One experience while serving as Minister of Christian Education continues to inspire me. While the Liturgical Dancers practiced in the auditorium for a Sunday service, I remained with them so I could close the building. The more I watched them, the more I began to experience the beauty of the spiritual connection that was taking place among them... and within ME TOO! By the time they finished that practice, something deep began to stir within me.... I want to be a part of this experience! Soon afterwards, I did dance with them and continue today as I am able to praise God with my heart, mind, and body reverently knowing the nearness and beauty of God's presence.

All these experiences remain deeply embedded within me and I'm tremendously thankful for all the support that I received as a child, as an adult, and while I served as Minister of Christian Education. As we change and shift and grow, a beautiful thing happens... all the memories and connections and support for one another continue even if in a different form. We are able to move through change with the love of Christ that is our foundation here at St. Andrew's.

ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

HONOR ROLL

This month's list highlights clergy, staff, and parishioners who worked with or volunteered in Christian Education, Nursery and Children's Chapel, Vacation Bible School, and the Episcopal Youth Community (EYC).

Mr. Bill Wilds	Miss Braxton Preston	Mr. Stewart Barnes
The Reverend Ms. Lorna Williams	Mrs. Janna Outlaw	Mrs. Susan Barnes
The Reverend Ms. Kathy Gray	Mrs. Kathleen Aiello	Mr. John Stewart
The Reverend Mrs. Anne Kirchner	Mrs. Pat Marcolini	Mrs. Elise Wall
The Reverend Mrs. Travis Greenman	Mrs. Tonia Graves	Mr. Curt Lowery
The Reverend Mrs. Carol Chamberlain	Mrs. Joy Johnson	Mrs. Samantha Hamilton
The Reverend Dr. David Perkins	Mrs. Mary Poole	Ms. Harper Lewis
The Reverend Mrs. Jen Kimball	Mr. Bill Poole	Dr. Tom Koerner
The Reverend Mr. John Herbst	Mrs. Lauri Poole Nosil	Mrs. Elizabeth Koerner
The Reverend Mrs. Rhonda Wheeler	Mrs. Betty Abbitt Hayes	Ms. Laura Downing
The Reverend Peter Edwards Jenks	Mrs. Anne Fowler	Ms. Maggie Mahloy
The Reverend Dr. Rob Marston	Mr. Francis Riley	Ms. Raven Cadena
The Reverend Mark Winward	Mr. Charles (Corky) Brooks	Mr. Nick Clark
The Reverend Sam Colley-Toothaker	Mrs. Gloria Brooks	Mrs. Hope Stewart
The Reverend Mrs. Betty Hudson	Mr. Butch Woodall	Mrs. Julie Duregger
Mrs. Vicki Mooza Lanier	Mrs. Peggy Woodall	Miss Meghan Duregger
Mrs. Sis Kinney	Ms. Ashley Woodall	Mr. Ryan Duregger
Mrs. Margaret Moore	Mrs. Nancy Orrison	Miss Grace Duregger
	Mr. Brad Norris	Mrs. Betsy Wolak
	Mrs. Louise Ragland	Mrs. Allison Morvant
	Mrs. Margie Holt	Mrs. Kay Ferguson
	Mrs. Beth Wolak Pegram	Mrs. Jennifer Batcha
	Mr. Laurens Wright	Ms. Margaret Bivins

Mrs. Carol Ficklen
Mr. Fritz Horne
Mrs. Vera Horne
Mrs. Patty VonOhlen
Mrs. Sara Charlock
Mrs. Ellen Ancel
Mrs. Happy Barnwell
Mrs. Betty Graham
Mrs. Grier Curtis
Mrs. Nancy Boxx
Mrs. Lisa Harrell
Miss Elizabeth Harrell
Mr. Spencer Harrell
Dr. Patricia Woodbury
Mrs. Melissa Sale
Mr. Cabell Sale
Miss Susan Sale
Mrs. Leah Klinger
Mr. Kurt Klinger
Miss Audre'ana Ellis
Mr. Alex Ellis
Miss Trinity Ellis
Mr. Roman Klinger
Miss Rachel Klinger
Mrs. Amanda Wood
Mrs. Talisha Eliis
Mrs. Amanda LaPlante
Mrs. Lois Holley
Mrs. Cheryl Zilkie
Miss Vanessa Smock

Mrs. Anne Thornton-Lindsay
Miss Haley Lindsay
Mrs. Debi Nicolai
Mrs. Allie Wittkamp
Mrs. Liz Rous
Mrs. Melissa Saunders
Mrs. Deborah Smith-George
Mrs. Ruth Kavanaugh
Mrs. Mary Gibson Waddill
Mrs. Becky Fitchett
Mrs. Karen Waddill
Mrs. Carol Umbenhaur
Ms. Ann Turner
Mrs. Jackie Legg
Mrs. Martha Field
Mrs. Susanne Lyons Daley
Mrs. Ann-Douglas Vaughan
Miss Grace Vaughan
Miss Brigit Davidson
Mr. Connor Davidson
Mr. Liam Davidson
Mrs. Cathy Frey
Mr. Craig Frey
Mr. Doug Vaughan
Mrs. Charlotte Vaughan
Mr. Bob Deans
Mrs. Sandy Deans
Mrs. Rene Butcher
Mrs. Sabrina Miles
Miss Sabrina-Lee Miles

Mr. Thomas Roberson
Mrs. Cristy Mahloy
Mrs. Barbara Daniels
Mrs. Anne Crocco
Mrs. Lucy Wright
Mrs. Karen Bean
Mrs. Darlene Bradberry
Mr. Sean Bradberry
Miss Catherine Bradberry
Mr. Ben Bradberry
Mrs. Candy Byrd
Mrs. Gina McGrory
Mrs. Joan Verhoef
Mrs. Kris Wessler
Mr. Tom Taylor
Mrs. Joy Taylor
Ms. Molly Taylor
Mr. Tommy Taylor
Mrs. Mary Bivins

For years, EYC members have attended camp, retreats, or youth weekends at Camp Chanco on the James River in Surry County. Describing a particularly fun experience, current EYC member Vanessa Smock said, "The first time I went to summer camp at Chanco, we went sunset paddleboarding. There was singing, bonding, and swimming, all under the setting sun."