

Rector's Note

6.25.26

This Wednesday, staff had a retreat at St Paul's. We reviewed the past program year, and started working on next year's calendar. We went over the list of projects we aspired to tackle at last year's retreat, and found we had accomplished many of them -- some very large! Quite a few of these projects were joint staff and volunteer efforts. And of course, this list is not exhaustive or inclusive of all we have done as a church community.

Tyrone opened and closed our time together with gorgeous and meaningful music. Luke led a guided meditation on gratitude.

Lorie walked us through the Realm interface and led discussion on how we will organize the profile part. Realm is church software we are adopting in place of ACS, for our member database and giving. It will allow St Martin's members to edit their own directory entries, including setting what is only known to staff and what is seen by other members. We will then all be able to access the directory online or on an app with passwords. (Paper directories will still be an option too!)

As the summer goes on you will hear more about Realm and how you can sign in to the directory. For now, we are building it up so that new users have some content to see when they join.

St Martin's sent Noor to the [Episcopal Communicators](#) Conference this past April. Noor shared some of what she learned and reflected on from that conference, presenting on some broad values to keep in mind about church communications. Among the learnings is that communications is not ancillary to ministry, it is a ministry of its own. And it is about storytelling and relationships.

I am so proud to be a part of such a committed and talented team. Many thanks to Luke, Lorie, Tyrone, Noor, James, Julia, Connie, and Kate for a really joy-filled and fruitful time that will benefit the whole community in the coming year.

This was a big planning week in general. On Tuesday a group of ministry leaders met to plan the next phase of the Capital Campaign, including heat and air conditioning for the sanctuary, finishing the undercroft for use by youth and other groups, and providing full accessibility to the church and undercroft by adding a lift and stairs down at the church entrance (narthex). If you want to know more about this initiative or want to be involved, please reach out to me. Tuesday evening at vestry, we considered a program to lead us through a mutual ministry review, to get an idea of who we are as a church community and what is working well or needs strengthening.

We are in a different season, with some of our regular programming on summer hiatus. But we hardly seem to have gone to sleep! Sunday's worship was incredibly full, with Bluegrass Mass, a baptism, recognizing graduates, and Father's Day coffee hour in the columbarium. This coming Sunday, Anne Alexis will preach and serve as Deacon, one day after her ordination.

We are a very active and committed parish. And also, rest is important too. Next week I go away on silent retreat at Eastern Point Retreat Center in Gloucester. There will be lots to reflect on from the past year, and lots to be grateful for.

I hope you also have some good rest and fun planned in the coming months!

Mary+