

Rector's Report to the Vestry, November 17, 2025, The Rev. Katherine Lewis

As has been my practice, I've organized my report to the vestry using the 4 ECMN priorities as categories for reflecting on my ministry at St. David's.

JUSTICE

Protest at the Bishop Whipple Federal Building

I participated in a protest at the Bishop Whipple Federal Building on October 24 in response to the current administration's immigration policies and on the day of a visit from Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem. The Whipple building houses an immigration court. Protest organizers expressly encouraged the participation of local clergy and there was a significant presence by people of faith, including Episcopalians. Bishop Loya was one of the key speakers at the event.

Isaiah

Susan Taylor continues to serve as the leader of our participation in advocacy work in partnership with the organization Isaiah. The group has constructed a "yes agenda" that lays out key systemic justice issues that we care about, including food insecurity, healthcare, housing, civil rights, democracy, education, gun safety, and the economy. We are gearing up for an Isaiah convention on Saturday, December 13 and for a Palm Sunday 2026 event. While my time constraints do not allow me to be part of the regular meetings of the St. David's Isaiah group, Susan briefs me on the group and its work. I continue to participate in clergy groups supporting these justice activities. I met with Isaiah organizer Ben Whalen this past week to touch base and strategize.

CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY

St. George's

A group of us (David Pearson, Randy Schwichtenberg, Roger Stratton, Anna Belz-Brock, Diane Curley, Gretchen Lord, and myself) participated in a walkthrough of the St. George's building on October 28. We made a list of items that are important for St. George's to bring with them and of those things we wish to have.

The wardens and I met with St. George's wardens to discuss financial and legal matters related to the merger. We will continue this conversation in a meeting in December with the bishop, ECMN's Kelsey Schuster, members of the Trustees, the Chancellor, and other diocesan leaders.

I have been working with St. George's leadership to support their moving cremains that had been interred in their columbarium. There may be 2 or so urns that will be transferred to our columbarium; conversations are still underway.

St. George's will have their last Sunday worship on December 28 and will officially join us for worship on Epiphany Sunday, January 11.

Newcomers

We had a great newcomer welcome on November 9! Thank you to Newcomer Team, Ann Robinson, Jane Sandsmark, and Julia Moser-Hardy. We are seeing many new people on Sundays (beyond St. George's parishioners). Thank you, in advance, for greeting and getting to know these visitors. Our next newcomer brunch will be in May.

Staff/HR

The wardens met with me to conduct my annual evaluation and I, likewise, have been meeting with staff to conduct theirs. I have also been working with Shea on staffing budget numbers for 2026.

You will see a notice in the weekly email on November 20 that Shea Brendalen will be retiring in 2026. Karin Lindquist (a member of the HR Committee) and I have developed a position description for a new Minister of Finance position which will be posted in the coming week or so. This will be a big transition for us, of course, as Shea has been a phenomenal leader (and amazing person) on our staff and within our community. Stay tuned for more information.

DISCIPLESHIP

Advent/Christmas/Epiphany

We have plans in place for a meaningful Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, including an Advent Retreat, a bible study on the early chapters of the Gospel of Luke, caroling, and, of course, worship. A brochure with all these offerings will be coming out as early as next week.

Instructed Eucharist

We had an instructed Eucharist this month as a way of helping people learn why we do what we do during Sunday morning worship.

FAITHFUL INNOVATION

Art Dreamers

Our sanctuary art is still in process with the goal of installation by the second Sunday of Advent (original goal was 1 Advent). The east wall will be refreshed as well: removing

the light fixture, using wood slats to cover the vents, and painting the wall. The cross for the All Saints' Columbarium Chapel, to be made by Chris Carda out of wood from the old oak tree, will be installed before the end of the year. These projects are being funded by our endowment.

Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

I met with leaders from Bet Shalom synagogue, Mills Church, and Spirit of Peace congregation to plan our Thanksgiving service which will take place on Sunday evening, November 23.

Community Night Trunk or Treat

We held our first Trunk or Treat community night on October 22. Thank you to Cathy Schwichtenberg and Anna Belz-Brock for your leadership and to all who supported the event by making chili, decorating car trunks, and showing up!