

THE WEEKLY WORD – SEPT 23RD, 2026
17TH WEEK AFTER PENTECOST

*St. George's Mission
Committed Christians
providing hope, help, and hospitality
in Northern Newport News*

A Season of Creation

Each year from September 1 to October 4, the Christian family unites for this worldwide celebration of prayer and action to protect our common home.

This year, the theme for the Season is “**Living Water.**”

Hope Church and St. George's Joint Worship

When: Sunday, Sept. 27, 11:00 am

Location: Newport News Park **Shelter 10** (see map with arrow below)

Hope Church parishioners will supply the BBQ lunch. Option: St. George's attendees may contribute fruit.

Shelter No. 10 can accommodate up to 80 people, however, bring a lawn chair if desired. Hope Church will arrive early and prepare everything needed for the worship service.

Worship Service: 11:00–11:40 AM

BBQ Lunch: 12:00 PM

Treasure Hunt after lunch — there will be small papers with prizes written on them around the trees and grass for everyone to find.

If you need transportation, please call the church office and let Dana know: 757-877-0088.
Let's plan to meet in the church parking lot at 10:30 and carpool or "caravan" to the park.



Peninsula Ministry Partnership (St. Augustine's, St. George's, and St. Mark's)

Sharing our Ministry Together

Thursday Bible Study this Thursday, September 24th

Held 7-8 pm; new attendees welcome! Material used is published on the Episcopal website written by church teachers, organized by liturgical occasion & church season. Join the Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84370729616?pwd=M2JoVGw1bVpEMFBFTk55QWphN2RPdz09>

Certificate of Appreciation from the Army Emergency Relief (AER)

St. George's received this Certificate of Appreciation from the Army Emergency Relief (AER) group thanking us for the donation that was collected at the PMP joint celebration honoring St. George, the patron saint of soldiers, scouts and knights. Thanks to the generosity of the 3 PMP churches, we were able to send a \$502 check to AER to assist active-duty soldiers, retirees and Army families.





PMP Outreach Support for St. Augustine's Feeding Program

On Saturday, September 19, volunteers from St. Augustine's, St. George's and St. Mark's worked together preparing, packing and serving residents in the St. Augustine's local community in need of a meal. This long-standing outreach program is held on the 3rd and 4th Saturdays of the month. Volunteers from various churches and community organizations can sponsor a Saturday by determining the menu and purchasing and preparing the food. Other volunteers help serve and/or distribute the lunch. We will have other opportunities to support this outreach effort in 2027.



Stewardship Season: Plenty Good Room

October 4 – November 15th

As we close out the season of creation which reminds us of our call to be good stewards of God's creation, for the next 6 weeks, we will reflect on God's abundance and our call to make space for all. There is room for everyone at God's table. This year's theme, *Plenty Good Room*, reminds us that stewardship is not only about financial and in-kind gifts. It is also about relationships – the ways we are connected to God, to one another, and to our neighbors.

Our parish budget is one way we tell the story of those relationships. Each pledge and gift sustains our common life: children growing in faith, neighbors receiving meals and care, worshippers being welcomed, and friends finding hope. Our budget is more than numbers; it is a reflection of our values and our mission. During this Stewardship Season, I invite you to consider the relationships that have sustained you in this church, and how your generosity can help extend that welcome to others. There is, indeed, *plenty good room* in God's house.

Where Have You Encountered God?

As you read in Roscoe's encounter in Yosemite National Park, God meets us in all kinds of places: among giant Sequoias, on a mountaintop, beside the ocean, around a family table, in the quiet of a church sanctuary, or even in the middle of an ordinary weekday.

We invite you to share a photograph of a place where **you have encountered God**. It might be a beautiful place that awakened your sense of God's presence, a meaningful place

connected to a special memory, or a simple, everyday place where you experienced grace, peace, love, or wonder.

Along with your photo, please include a brief sentence or two telling us **where the picture was taken and how you encountered God there.**

Ways to submit:

- Digital - Email your picture and description to the church email address: stgeorgess.nn@gmail.com
- Physical photo with a description – leave in church office or give it to Lisa Adams

Let's create a collection of images that reminds us that God is not confined to our church walls. Wherever we go, God is already there, waiting to be noticed. These will be shared in Weekly Word and on the St. George's website. Once we have a number of submission, we will also create a display for the Narthex.

Where have you encountered God? Share your picture and your story!

Encountering God in an Ice Cave- By David Adams- St. George's



There are moments when we encounter God in places we never expected. For me, one of those moments came in July 2012, while exploring an ice cave on Mendenhall Glacier in Alaska.

Standing inside this ice cave, surrounded by walls of brilliant blue ice, I was struck by the beauty and majesty of God's creation. The light filtering through the ancient ice gave the cave a deep sense of sacredness. It felt like entered the "Holy of Holies" created not by human hands, but by God.

And there was silence. No voices, no machinery, no sounds from the world outside. There was only the slight groaning of the ice and the movement of water beneath my feet. Those small sounds seemed to make the silence even more profound.

In that moment, I was reminded of the Psalmist's words: "Be still, and know that I am God." There was little need for words. The beauty surrounding me invited me simply to stop, look, listen, and give thanks.

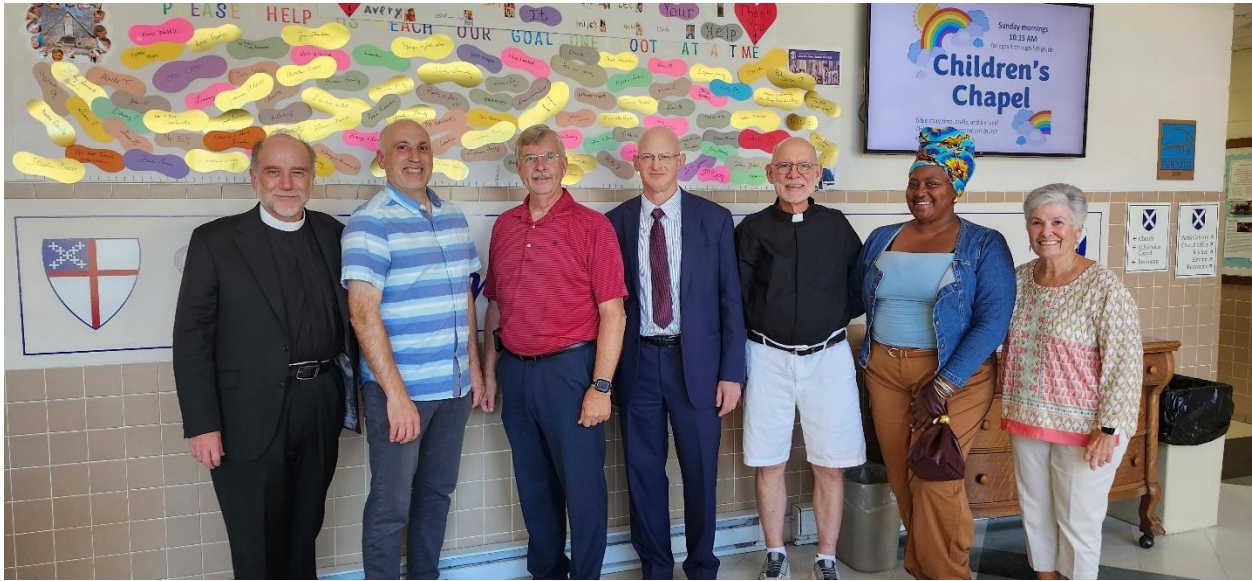
Yet the glacier also reminded me of something else. The glacier that appears so massive and permanent is actually changing all the time. The ice moves, melts, and reshapes itself. Creation is both breathtakingly beautiful and remarkably fragile.

Perhaps that is one of the ways God speaks to us through creation. We are invited not only to enjoy its beauty, but also to recognize our responsibility to care for it.

Sometimes we encounter God in a church, sometimes in prayer, and sometimes on a glacier on a journey through the wilds of Alaska. However, the invitation is always the same: slow down, pay attention, and notice the holy moments God places before us.

"The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it." — Psalm 24:1

Addressing Coal Dust in Our Community



John Herbst (shown center in suit and tie) of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Newport News, led a meeting of the members of St. Andrew's and friends to meet with Virginia State Senator J.D. "Danny" Diggs, District 24 (shown center in the red polo shirt) on Tuesday afternoon, September 8 at the church. St. Andrew's had invited interested members of the PMP to join. The meeting was called to discuss the serious ongoing problem that the airborne dust from the open-air transport and storage of coal poses to our community, how we inspire our elected leaders to address it, and with whom should we speak to, and in what order, so that real solutions can be found and mandated. St. Augustine's member Sharyna Smith (second from the right) and I attended and each of us told the State Senator of our concerns. The meeting group was much larger than the group photographed, as a number of people, including the Revs. Anne Kirchmeier and Marc Vance, had to leave before the meeting was over.

The meeting was wide ranging. Themes that came out included:

- The recognition by the churches of this very real, long ignored problem
- The need for and best practices for educating lawmakers about community issues, like Coal Dust
- Who to approach [Sen. Diggs recommended a scattershot approach, hitting up local (city) government, state legislature, and congress (representatives and senators)]
- And in what order - start right now with City Council
- What is the benefit - and who ordered - the latest round of monitors and testing

It was a friendly and productive meeting with Senator Diggs. He seemed genuinely interested to hear the participants' concerns and ideas. He said with evident surprise that this was only the second group to approach him about this issue - the other was an Environmental Advocacy group, just last week - in his three years in this position. A Republican, he spoke proudly of the legislation he has crafted with his Democratic colleagues across the aisle.

Next Steps

Taking what we learned from Senator Diggs, John Herbst will be meeting on Friday with Newport News councilman Cleon Long and a small group. John writes, "My goal for this meeting is just to figure out how to get the City to work with our legislators, so that we're sure that coal dust is a real priority for everyone."

John further asks interested people for help: "There are a couple of other things for us to do. First, it seems time to send a written letter to Cia Price." After being unable to reach Ms. Price as planned a few weeks back, and still waiting for a reply, John writes, "I do not want to be contentious, but we want her to be aware that we're very interested to know where things stand with her and coal dust. Would anyone care to take a crack at crafting such a letter?"

"I'd like to try to arrange meetings with all members of Newport News representatives in the Virginia legislature: Delegates Shelly Simonds (276-3022) and Mark Downey ([757-912-0022](tel:757-912-0022)), and Senator Mamie Locke (825-7327). Would any constituents of these legislators care to make a call? We prefer to meet in person at their offices or St. Andrew's, and they should expect between 8 and 12 of us. We want to know their familiarity with the coal dust problem (I hope that they know more than Danny Diggs!), and their ideas about finding a good solution. When you leave a message, they can call you OR me.

"It also occurred to me that since many of these people have day jobs, we might want to consider meeting them in evenings or weekends, for their convenience. Let me know how you feel about this. Thanks for your time and energy. Blessings, John"

If you would like to join this effort, you are most welcome to participate. John simply asks that you **please let him know** what you're doing, so that he can continue to coordinate this effort. You can reach John at: [\(434\) 228-0210](tel:434-228-0210) and herbstot13@gmail.com.

With you on the journey,
Charlie

Invitation to Compline with St. Mark's

On Wednesday evenings at 7pm, St. Mark's hosts a service of healing prayers, followed by either traditional Compline or New Zealand Night Prayers. This usually takes no more than 20 minutes.

They would love to have other members of the PMP join them. It's presently hosted on the St. Mark's Zoom channel (info is below or click the Zoom icon at the bottom of www.smechampton.org).

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84430506697?pwd=bUlUNDZES1JscHFTcjdaQlptL2FEdz09>

Meeting ID: 844 3050 6697

Password: 5414

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,84430506697# US

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US

+1 253 215 8782 US

+1 267 831 0333 US

Meeting ID: 844 3050 6697

Week of September 23rd

In our Diocesan Cycle of Prayers, we pray for St. Andrew's, Norfolk and St. Paul's, Norfolk and for all staff, paid and volunteer, who support our congregations and related organizations.

St. George's Prayer List

<i>Deania, Teresa & Steve S., Davidsinia, Christina M., Richard, Linell, Henrietta, Lacy, Wil, David G, Skip J., Darlene M., Gale, Sandra, Serena, Gerald, Joan M., Carmen, Jennifer H., Bobby, Gwen, Candace, Urith, Janette, Phyllis M., Calvin, Richard and Ronda T., Mary S., Pamela E., Bill B., Leslie T., Brian M., Connie, Billy, Celestina, Thelma, Aimee S., Mark, Yvette, Connie H, Sarah, Alyscia and Audrey</i> And Our Military: <i>Eduardo, Joe, Ashley, Anthony, Nyla, and Dominique.</i>
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Readings for September 27th

The First Lesson

Ezekiel 18:1-4,25-32

The word of the LORD came to me: What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

Psalm 25:1-8

- 1 To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul;
my God, I put my trust in you; *
let me not be humiliated,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.
- 2 Let none who look to you be put to shame; *
let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.
- 3 Show me your ways, O LORD, *
and teach me your paths.

- 4 Lead me in your truth and teach me, *
for you are the God of my salvation;
in you have I trusted all the day long.
- 5 Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, *
for they are from everlasting.
- 6 Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; *
remember me according to your love
and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.
- 7 Gracious and upright is the LORD; *
therefore he teaches sinners in his way.
- 8 He guides the humble in doing right *
and teaches his way to the lowly.

The Epistle during A Season of Creation

A Reading from Hope is Here! Spiritual Practices for Pursuing Justice and Beloved Community, Luther Smith Jr.

The Rev. Dr. Luther E. Smith Jr. is Professor Emeritus of Church and Community, Candler School of Theology, Emory University. He is the author and editor of influential books on Howard Thurman, Christian community, and spiritual practices.

I hear people's anxiety about the present and future state of the world... All this has led many to feel and say, "The times have never been this bad!" Although I understand how people come to this conclusion, I also know that every generation has faced crises that threatened to rip apart their personal, social, and political foundations... We insult our ancestors by exclaiming that we are overwhelmed and incapacitated because we live in the worst of times. This is our season! This is our time! We cannot use the increased complexity of our times and lives as an excuse to withdraw from our distinctive challenges. Every generation has dealt with confusing new realities that led to bewildering circumstances. Every generation has had the challenges and opportunities to embrace the work of hope. This is our time! This is our season! Hope is here to enliven us to life and the practices of justice and beloved community... Each one of us can be a sign of hope for this and future seasons.

The Gospel

Matthew 21:23-32

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."

Newport News residents can help neighbors experiencing food insecurity this September by participating in a community Peanut Butter and Jelly Collection Drive.

From Sept. 1 through Sept. 30, residents, businesses, schools, churches and community groups are encouraged to collect unopened jars of peanut butter and jelly to support local food banks and help provide meals for individuals and families facing food insecurity.

The collection is being held in recognition of [Hunger Action Month](#), a nationwide effort to raise awareness about hunger and

encourage communities to take action. Peanut butter and jelly are simple pantry staples that can provide a convenient meal, making them a meaningful way for residents to make a difference through a small donation.

Getting involved is easy. Residents can pick up an extra jar of peanut butter or jelly during their next grocery trip, organize a collection with coworkers, friends or neighbors, or encourage their school, church or community group to participate. Every jar collected can help support local efforts to ensure families have access to food.

Newport News is also participating in a friendly Hampton Roads community challenge to see how much the region can collect throughout the month. Residents are encouraged to share photos and updates of their collections using [#HamptonRoadsPBChallenge](#) and help spread the word.

Bring your unopened jars of peanut butter and jelly to the collection bins at Newport News City Hall, where two bins are available in the lobby and one is located on the 10th floor inside the City Manager's Office, or drop off your donations at the collection bin in the lobby of City Center.



ECW's Women in Leadership Symposium

You're invited to an inspiring Women in Leadership Symposium hosted by Episcopal Church Women, featuring distinguished leaders in the Church.



Episcopal Church Women



Women in Leadership Symposium

Saturday, October 17th ~ 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Christ & Grace Episcopal Church, Petersburg 23805



President Lisa Bortner
President of the National ECW



Bishop Susan Haynes
11th Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia



Dr. Renee Escoffery-Torres
ECW President of Province III



The Rev. Lissie Rhoton
Rector of Christ & Grace Church



Helen Sharpe-Williams
Former President ECW of the Diocese of Southern Virginia



Martha Burton
Moderator

Scan to Register!



Christ & Grace Episcopal Church
1545 S Sycamore St, Petersburg, VA 23805

Attend In Person or Via Zoom ~ No Registration Fee; Lunch \$15

This dynamic event brings together remarkable leaders, including:

- President Lisa Bortner, President of the National ECW
- Bishop Susan Haynes, 11th Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia
- Dr. Renee Escoffery-Torres, ECW President of Province III
- The Rev. Lissie Rhoton, Rector of Christ & Grace Church
- Helen Sharpe-Williams, Former President, ECW of the Diocese of Southern Virginia
- Martha Burton, Moderator

Date: Saturday, October 17th

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Location: Christ & Grace Episcopal Church, [1545 S Sycamore St, Petersburg, VA 23805](https://www.google.com/maps/place/1545+S+Sycamore+St,+Petersburg,+VA+23805/@37.22587,-77.43087,15z)

Whether you're seeking inspiration, professional development, or fellowship with parishioners from across the Diocese of Southern Virginia, this symposium offers an excellent opportunity to learn from experienced leaders and strengthen your own leadership journey.

Attendance: In-person or via Zoom. Cost: No registration fee; lunch available for \$15

