



St. George's
300th
Anniversary

Commemoration
of the 300th Anniversary
of the Parish of
St. George's

May 1, 2021

**And Celebration of
Historic Places Designation**

You are welcome at
St. George's Church:
Regardless of race,
nationality,
sexual orientation,
gender expression,
or tradition.

May 1, 2021

The mission of the Church is to
restore all people to unity with God
and each other in Christ.
- Book of Common Prayer, pg. 855

Welcome, Greetings, and Land Acknowledgment

The Rev. Joseph H. Hensley, Jr., Rector of St. George's Episcopal Church

Mayoral Proclamation

The Hon. Mary Katherine Greenlaw, Mayor of the City of Fredericksburg

WHEREAS: in 1720, St. George's Parish was established by the Virginia General Assembly; and throughout its existence, it and the City of Fredericksburg have grown and thrived together; and

WHEREAS: in 1851, the City of Fredericksburg installed its city clock in the St. George's steeple and connected it to the church bell, and the church building forms a major element of Fredericksburg's iconic skyline, both constant reminders of our enduring connection; and

WHEREAS: St. George's roles in the Civil War – as a fortress in 1862, as a center of revival in the spring of 1863, and as a hospital in 1862 and 1864 for wounded Federal and Confederate troops – made a significant impact on the futures of Fredericksburg and the United States; and

WHEREAS: from 1765 to 1770 St. George's operated the Bray School to educate enslaved children, a highly controversial activity; in 1795, St. George's organized the Male Charity School; in 1874, St. George's Benevolent Society was incorporated to benefit the poor and to assist widows and orphans; in 1955, Church services were desegregated well in advance of the norm; in 1968, St. George's hosted a community service in mourning following the assassination of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; from 1985 to 2020, St. George's actively formed organizations serving regional homeless persons, including Loisann's Hope House, Thurman Brisben Shelter, and Micah Ministries; in 2011, St. George's opened The Table, an open market food pantry for all persons; and in 2013 St. George's hosted a special service of remembrance, celebration and witness commemorating the Emancipation Proclamation's 150th anniversary; all demonstrating its dedication to the holy mission of social justice and equity; and

WHEREAS: on 23 March 2019, St. George's was listed in the National Registry of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Registry.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mary Katherine Greenlaw, Mayor of the City of Fredericksburg, on behalf of the City Council, do hereby recognize and encourage everyone to extend their appreciation and celebrate on this day of May 1, 2021, the 300th Anniversary of the establishment of St. George's Parish.

Bishop: Alleluia. Christ is Risen.

People: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Bishop: Dearly beloved, through the ages, Almighty God has moved the Church to build houses of prayer and praise, and to set apart places for the ministry of Holy Word and Sacraments. With gratitude for the three hundred years of faithful ministry in the parish of St. George, we are now gathered to bless it once again in God's Name.

Let us pray,

Almighty God, to whose glory we celebrate the anniversary of this community of prayer: We give you thanks for the fellowship of those who have worshiped in this place, and we pray that all who seek you here may find you, and be filled with your joy and peace; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Standing at the door of the church, the bishop marks the threshold with the sign of the cross, saying

Peace be to this house, and to all who enter here: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

A Litany of Thanksgiving for a Church

Leader: Let us thank God whom we worship here in the beauty of holiness.

Eternal God, the heaven of heavens cannot contain you, much less the walls of temples made with hands. Graciously receive our thanks for this place, and accept the work of our hands, offered to your honor and glory.

For the Church universal, of which these visible buildings are a symbol,

People: We thank you, God.

Leader: For your presence whenever two or three have gathered together in your Name,

People: We thank you, God.

Leader: For this place where we may be still and know that you are God,

People: We thank you, God.

Leader: For these walls, so well prayed in, and the dreams of those who have gathered here,

People: We thank you, God.

Leader: For the stories, told and yet to be heard, of your faithfulness in this place,

People: We thank you, God.

Leader: For the fulfilling of our desires and petitions as you see best for us,

People: We thank you, God.

Leader: For your love made known to us at the font and the table,

People: We thank you, God.

Leader: For the blessing of our vows and the crowning of our years with your goodness,

People: We thank you, God.

Leader: For the saints who before us have found their reward, and the strength to follow them,

People: We thank you, God.

Leader: For the fellowship of St. George, our patron, and of all your Saints,

People: We thank you, God.

The bishop adds a concluding Collect:

Bishop: Gracious God, we pray for your Church. Fill it with all truth, in all truth with peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in any thing it is amiss, reform it. Where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in want, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

A Reading from 1 Peter 2:1-9

Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation-- if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," and "A stone that makes them stumble, and

a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Reader: Here ends the reading.

Remarks by the Rt. Reverend Susan Goff, Bishop Suffragan and Ecclesiastical Authority of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

Blessing of the Plaque

The commemorative plaque recognizing the church's inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places is unveiled and blessed with the following words.

Bishop: Ever-faithful God, in loving care your hand has created us, formed us in your image, and breathed into us the gift of life. You have given and yet still give the people of this parish, St. George's, the will to do the work you have given them to do. You have been an unfailing presence to them in times of following your will and in times when they have turned from you. Now bless this plaque, a token of your faithfulness and help in ages past, and of hope for years to come, that it may be a sign to all those who see it of the promise of Christ, the indwelling of the Spirit, and of your Love to all who will come to know You here, in the Name of the One who creates, redeems, sustains, and who is + Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Peace

Bishop: The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: And also with you.

The people share a sign of peace with one another.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Episcopal Blessing

Bishop: Our help is in the Name of the Lord.

People: The Maker of heaven and earth.

Bishop: Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

People: From this time forth for evermore.

The bishop blesses the people.

The Dismissal

Rector: Alleluia. Alleluia. Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.

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