Therefore Do Not Worry About Tomorrow

The following is our Rector’s report from our parish’s Annual Meeting on November 14. We hope it speaks to you at your home parish, also.

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (Matthew 6:34)

Most of us like to look ahead and make plans for the future. If we want to achieve a goal, we must take the appropriate steps toward fulfillment. This is simple common sense, and all of us recognize the wisdom in this process. Big goals or small ones require this kind of logic.

We find ourselves in a time when our usual thinking is not applicable. It is not possible to look out too far ahead. We have seen ups and downs. We have opened and closed. We have been forced to table our plans and rethink our approach to how we worship, gather and care for one another. This is more than frustrating. At times, we have been paralyzed by factors beyond our control.

We all have questions. When will we be able to stop wearing masks in indoor worship? When will we be able to have communion in both kinds? Who is making these decisions, the state, the diocese or you? What is the plan? So often I have had to say, “I don’t know.” or “We have to wait and see.” Know that we are looking ahead, making decisions based on the information we have. I am grateful for your flexibility and hope as we weather the challenges.

The vestry, clergy and staff have worked to carry on and meet the needs of the parish within the restrictions that are necessary. This is a faith-filled and creative response to those feelings of paralysis that has not been easy. Baptisms, weddings and funerals were postponed. Visits to hospitals and care facilities have not been possible with visitation restrictions. Even now, clergy access can be curtailed by new virus cases. It can be difficult to know what is happening with parishioners, unless we are notified. The Bruton Cares ministry has stayed in contact with many to offer support.

Please know that we are doing the best we know how. In a parish-wide communication, I asked for ideas about the ways in which we can serve you better. That offer still stands. If you have information about a fellow parishioner who needs support, please share that with us.

Above all, I want to thank you for your support and understanding. I thank the vestry, clergy and staff for their efforts in the face of unprecedented challenges. Thank you for your ongoing generosity and giving to Bruton Parish Church. As several sources of income evaporated due to a lack of visitation, concerts and plate income, you have stood by your parish and enabled us to function in albeit reduced fashion. We have been able to maintain staff and mission efforts for those most in need, even beginning new projects.

Thank each one of you for being faithful members of your parish church. I look forward to the day when I can give answers to the questions. God bless us all!

Pax Christi,
The Rev’d Chris Epperson

Visit our YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/BrutonParish for services that are being live-streamed.
WHAT THEN SHALL WE DO?
Dr. JanEl Will, Organist

One joy of being a musician is participating in the creative process. When that process includes bringing about newly composed music, the joy is even greater! Over the years, I have had the great privilege of being a part of many commissioned works thanks to my inspiring colleague, Rebecca Davy, and the support of many here at Bruton Parish.

On the Third Sunday of Advent, December 12, the Bruton Parish Choirs will once again premiere a new work written for them. The first step in commissioning is to choose a composer. This came easily as Beckie had worked with someone on a prior project for us, and I was drawn to the accessible style of his music.

Michael Trotta, born 1978, is a renowned American choral figure who happens to be a Hampton Roads native, making the connection to Bruton even more meaningful. An educator of all grade levels, elementary through university, Trotta recognized the hard work and desire of choral conductors to have new music to share with their singers. This drew him to compose. He is described by Gramophone as a composer who is distinguished by his “appealing melodic lines, tender harmonies and a palette of glowing vocal and instrumental colors.” This new anthem Trotta has written is composed for a four-part choir and organ based on the Gospel reading of Luke 3:10-14 for the Third Sunday of Advent. The paraphrased text ends with Micah 6:8 and was written by Trotta’s colleague, Vaughn Roste.

Crowd:
What shall we do? What shall we do?

John the Baptist:
If you have two coats, then you should share one. If you have food, give to those who have none.

Tax Collectors:
What shall we do? What shall we do?

John the Baptist:
Take only the money allotted for you. Never charge more than the sum that is due.

Soldiers:
What shall we do? What shall we do?

John the Baptist:
Do not be tempted to exploit your power. All work gives dignity, pride, joy, and honor.

All:
What does the Lord require of you? We should do justice, we should love kindness, (Luke 3:10-14)
We should walk humbly with our God. (Micah 6:8)

Beckie and I discussed the idea of commissioning an anthem in memory of Liz Will (1927-2020) shortly after her death and chose Advent as a good possibility for new music, and this text came to my mind. When I first met my mother-in-law Liz, she was thrilled to learn that I worked at Bruton Parish. This church was very special to her and Dad Will, and it was one of their favorite sites in Colonial Williamsburg. A gracious woman who recognized beauty in life, Liz appreciated history and especially enjoyed attending annual choral performances like the Rockefeller memorial concerts.

After reading this poignant and personal setting of the Gospel lesson, I shared with Beckie and Michael that my husband Al and I had received word that a scholarship had been given in Liz’s name in her retirement home of Edenton, North Carolina. She was a strong supporter of many groups connected to their living in historic Edenton but especially her church which hosts the Boys & Girls Club. This text certainly reflects Mom’s quiet example of “giving a coat” or anything else anyone needed. She was truly a humble servant!

We also felt strongly that we should recognize the Bruton Choir members both past and present as part of this musical offering. We remember the many choir members of Bruton Parish who died in the past year-and-a-half and had been key figures in the life of Bruton’s music ministry. We honor both their years of dedicated service and the continuing ministry of our current choir members whose lives are also filled with song. On behalf of the choirs, we hope many of you will be present to hear the premiere of this new choral anthem on December 12 (which will also be live-streamed).
RETURN TO FRIENDS DAY AT BRUTON PARISH
Jim Morford, Friends of Bruton Committee Chair

After a year and a half suspension due to the COVID pandemic, Friends of Bruton hosted the 8th (almost) annual Friends Day at Bruton Parish on Saturday, September 18. (photo 8)

Hosting nearly ninety guests, the day began in the recently renovated and expanded Colonial Williamsburg Foundation’s two world-class museums — the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum and the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum. (photo 5)

Bruton member Ronald M. Hurst, Vice President for Museums, Preservation, and Historic Resources and Chief Curator at Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, and who led the recent museum expansion, delivered a presentation on how the renovation and expansion program came to be and what has been added as a result. (photo 1)

Mr. Hurst’s presentation was followed by guided tours that featured highlights of the 65,000 square-foot expansion that includes seven new galleries. Friends Day guests viewed portions of collections not previously displayed and visited newly added galleries. (photo 2)

Following an outstanding morning program, the Friends Day Luncheon was held in the Regency Room of the world-renowned Williamsburg Inn. (photo 7)

Our rector, the Rev’d Chris Epperson, welcomed the guests to Friends Day 2021. They then enjoyed a delicious buffet luncheon. (photo 3)

Our luncheon speaker, Dr. William M. Kelso, is Emeritus Director of Archaeology and Research at Historic Jamestown. Dr. Kelso’s PowerPoint presentation reviewed his distinguished career as Director of Archaeology. A highlight of his talk featured his discovery that the original fort had not been washed away by the James River but only a corner of it had been lost. His research discovered the remains of the fort including the first Anglican church to be built in what was to become America. (photo 4)

He also shared stories of recent discoveries as well as future plans for the site of the first permanent English settlement in the New World. Bill Kelso revealed that one of the highlights of his career was to spend half an hour guiding HRH Elizabeth II around the archeological discoveries of Jamestown.
If you would like to watch a video of his presentation, please send an email to hcooley@brutonparish.org, and we will be glad to email you the link.

Friends of Bruton presented Dr. Kelso with a donation to the recently established Dr. William M. and Ellen B. Kelso Fund for Archaeology. (photo 6 - Friend of Bruton Chair, Jim Morford; Dr. William Kelso; and Don Bogus, Chair of Friends Day 2021).

Three lucky ticket holders won two books authored by Dr. Kelso and one recently published by Diana Bailey titled *The Bruton Parish Story*. Both authors signed their books for the winners. (Dr. Kelso signs books for Sara Fogarty, photo 8, and for Jo Anne Coy, our first Charter Member of Friends of Bruton and a Cornerstone Circle member. (photo 9)

Dr. Kelso’s wife, Ellen, and Cornerstone Member Elaine Bogus look at a brochure containing highlights of the Kelso’s life at Jamestown. (photo 10)

Many compliments made by guests suggest that our Eighth Friends Day at Bruton Parish was one of, if not the, best ever.
Because I am convalescing from knee replacement surgery, I had the time to read The Bruton Fount from cover to cover. Nicely done! I especially enjoyed your article on Deacons and Archdeacons, but really, I enjoyed it all.

I have sent in my check to become a Cornerstone member and look forward to further issues of your newsletter and all that the Friends of Bruton do.

Yours in Christ,
+ Susan

The Rt. Rev. Susan B. Haynes
Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia

A new American Flag was recently presented to Bruton Parish Church by the Williamsburg Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution (SAR). Accepting the flag on behalf of the church is our rector, the Rev’d Christopher Epperson, shown next to the flag. Presenting the flag is Bruton member William Greaf, Third Vice President of the Virginia Society, Sons of the American Revolution (VASSAR). Also pictured from left to right are SAR members Harley Stewart, Thomas Campbell, James Morford (Bruton member and SAR Chaplain) and David Westenberger. The flag was given in gratitude for the past 36 years of Services of Prayer and Thanksgiving conducted by SAR and Bruton Parish Church on July 4th in celebration of America’s independence. The new flag replaces one that has stood at the front of the church since the mid-1950s during the pastorate of the Rev’d Cotesworth Pinckney Lewis.

If you are a Friend of Bruton, whether part of our local congregation or you’re in town for a visit, drop by the Heritage Center in the Parish House where there is a binder that contains every issue of our quarterly newsletter, The Bruton Fount, which began in 2012.

If you’d like to take a copy of any issue with you, please talk to one of the Shop’s volunteers. Ask them to make you a copy, or we can also electronically send it to your email directly.

Visit our YouTube Channel below to revisit the most recent sermon given by our archdeacon, The Rev’d Jan Brown, on All Saints’ Sunday on November 7, 2021.

Each Sunday, our 11:15 a.m. service is live-streamed via our YouTube Channel for the members of our community — both local and worldwide — who are not physically present or for those who would like to revisit a particular service or sermon.

We keep a few months’ worth of sermons and services — along with other videos of parish life — which can be viewed at www.youtube.com/BrutonParish.

Become a subscriber today and automatically receive an email whenever we live-stream a service!
THE ADVENT WREATH AT BRUTON PARISH
Dianne Spence, Floral Guild Coordinator

Sunday, November 28, marks the season of Advent which is also the beginning of the Christian year. The word Advent is derived from the Latin "adventus...something is coming". Advent is observed at Bruton Parish as our "quiet time" as we await the coming of Christ. There are no flowers on the altar, but just the natural greens and berries found in the woods or in the gardens of our parishioners.

The Flower Guild creates the Advent wreath which has five white candles. One candle is lit each Sunday for the four Sundays in Advent, and the fifth candle in the center is lit Christmas Eve. There were no candles on the 18th century holy table, and candles did not appear until the 1840’s. Household candles were important to everyday life and somewhat precious given the process of the gathering of beeswax or melting fat/tallow and the dipping process. The most precious were white which came from spermaceti whale oil and was very expensive. Only the finest white candles were used in the church.

The herbs used in the wreath come from our own Biblical Garden at the Parish House and from gardens of parishioners and is created by Leslie Coe, Jill Sitcer, Dianne Spence and Toni Webb. Anne Conkling also contributed to this article. The herbs used in the wreath hold special significance:

Lamb’s Ear is used as a symbol of Christ based on John 1:29.

Lavender represents purity and virtue and beloved by Mary.

Marjoram, referred to as hyssop in the Bible, was used to mark doors during the first Passover.

Rose Hips have been long used for medicinal purposes.

Rosemary for remembrance. In legend, the herb changed its flower from white to blue in Mary’s honor, and was used for centuries to garland churches on great feast days.

Roses symbolize chasteness and fertility, and this flower is dedicated to Mary. They also symbolized the birth of Jesus as foretold in a 16th century hymn.

Rue is known as the herb of grace and repentance.

Sage is the herb of immortality.

Wreath represents eternal life, for in a circle, there is no beginning and no end.

REMEMBER BRUTON IN YOUR YEAR-END GIVING
Marty Easton, Development Director

It was a joy to meet Friends of Bruton who came to town for Friends Day on September 18, and those able to attend services the next day. For Friends who enjoy a visit during the Christmas season, know that we are planning the traditional Greening of the Church. It will take place Saturday, December 18. You can enjoy the lovely wreaths and pine roping on Sundays December 19 and 26 and also on January 2. Prior to December 18, the Advent Wreath will be in place. November 28 marks the start of Advent, the season when we await the coming of Christ. The Bruton Flower Guild creates a beautiful wreath for the church with herbs and five white candles.

In the spirit of the holidays, I invite you to consider Bruton Parish and our many ministries in your year-end giving, by making a contribution from the comfort of your own home! Here are a few fund choices you will find on our online gift form at https://abundant.co/brutonparishchurch/give. These and other selections are on the drop-down menu:

The Annual Fund is our fiscal backbone, receiving the regular, unrestricted gifts from members and other supporters. Annual Fund gifts are put to work immediately for the operation, programming and staffing at Bruton Parish. They also help keep the 300-year-old church building in good repair and comfortable for worshippers.

Friends of Bruton help support Our Worldwide Congregation with a gift of any size.

Become a member of Cornerstone Circle for a yearly contribution of $100 (this is labeled FOB-Cornerstone Circle on the menu).

Your support, at whatever level, will be deeply appreciated. You enhance Bruton Parish by your sharing in the call to preserve and promote its legacy. Thank you!

PRAYERS FOR OUR FRIENDS
Anne Conkling

Amazing and wonderful things can occur when we keep our fragile lives wrapped in prayer. Whether it is the Lord’s Prayer or a myriad of other possible prayers, each one brings a benefit and a sense of blessing and calm. It can be as simple as, Lord, have mercy! If you need prayers, email to hcooley@brutonparish.org, and our clergy and local Daughters of the King will be glad to pray for you or your need for three weeks.

O Lord our God, make us watchful and cheerful as we await the coming of Your son, Christ our Lord, that when he comes and knocks, he will find us not sleeping in sins, but awake and rejoicing in his praises, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

From the Gelasian Sacramentary, probably composed between 628 and 715.
The Hymns We Sing: 
We Gather Together to Ask the Lord’s Blessing

Jim Morford, Chair

Some of us can recall a time when our schoolteachers would, at this time of year, lead us in singing the Thanksgiving hymn, *We Gather Together to Ask the Lord’s Blessing*. These days, it can’t be sung in public schools. Its use is forbidden because the lyrics contain the word God. Nevertheless, it has become a favorite hymn most often sung in churches at Thanksgiving. Perhaps it is because Thanksgiving is when we gather around plentiful tables to thank God for the many blessings of this life that makes this hymn seem appropriate.

The history of the hymn tells a somewhat different story. It was first published in 1626 in a collection titled *Nederlandtsch Gedenckclanck* (loosely translated as Dutch songs of commemoration). Austrian Edward Kremser included it in a small collection of *Six Old Netherlands Folksongs* in 1877. The melody can be traced back to 1597 and may be older than that.

The hymn came to America through Theodore Baker, a New York-born musicologist who studied in Germany. He translated the hymn for an anthem entitled “Prayer for Thanksgiving” published in 1894. It is from Baker that the hymn gets its traditional Thanksgiving connection.

The origins of the hymn are found more in temporal than theological history. It started out as a folk song, whose secular lyrics set a decidedly nonreligious tone. The song celebrates freedom from Spanish oppression won by the Dutch. The Netherlands, long a stronghold for the Reformed theology of John Calvin, were in a struggle against Spain for their political independence and against the Catholic Church for religious freedom. A 12-year truce was established in 1609 during which the Dutch continued to assert their independence from Spain — independence that was finally assured by a treaty signed in 1648.

Political connotations in the hymn can be sensed in the phrase, “The wicked oppression now cease from distressing,” as an allusion to the persecutions by the Catholic Church perpetrated under the policies of Spain. The second verse states, “so from the beginning the fight we were winning,” stressing that Protestants had always been assured of winning the cause. The truce of 1609 proved that the Lord “wast at our side.”

The final stanza is a series of petitions —

...pray that thou still our defender will be.  
Let thy congregation escape tribulation;  
thy name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!

The ultimate battle has not been won and  
will not be won until all battles cease.

At Thanksgiving, when we once again sing this venerable hymn, let us recall God’s blessings and his gift of freedom whenever and wherever it occurs.

BECOME A CORNERSTONE MEMBER

As Friends of Bruton grew to be an established mission of the church, the Committee began to consider projects that could be supported by Friends. The programs and projects would be those that promoted the goal to preserve and promote the historic and spiritual heritage of Bruton Parish Church. What was needed was a stable funding source.

The Cornerstone Circle was created to provide that funding mechanism. For a modest annual contribution of just $100, Cornerstone Circle members are providing that funding. Each Cornerstone contributor receives a lapel pin replicating the weathervane that flies atop the steeple of Bruton Parish Church. The Bruton weathervane, that for over 250 years has pointed to the four corners of the earth, is the symbol of Friends of Bruton, Our Worldwide Congregation.

In September, thanks to the generous support of Cornerstone Circle, Friends of Bruton conducted a premier “Return to Friends Day” with a morning program at the Art Museums of Williamsburg and a luncheon in the Regency Room of the Williamsburg Inn that featured a presentation by world renowned archaeologist Dr. William Kelso.

The Friends of Bruton Committee is currently exploring ways to develop periodic video broadcasts of special programs at the church. We have begun conversations with Jamestown Rediscovery about programs that might be of interest to Friends of Bruton members. It is these types of programs that annual membership contributions make possible.

Friends of Burton appreciates past contributions made in support of the Cornerstone Circle. We welcome your continued support. We value your annual contribution of $100 or more for sustaining membership in Cornerstone Circle. As 2021 draws to a close, please consider joining Friends of Burton's Cornerstone Circle by making your tax-deductible contribution at bit.ly/bpconlinegiving and choose FOB-Cornerstone Member under Select Fund.
Friends of Bruton Resource Associates

The Ven. Jan Brown, Archdeacon, Bruton Parish

Colin Campbell, Former President & CEO
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (Emeritus)

Jo Anne Coy, Charter & Cornerstone Circle Member

Rebecca Davy, Bruton Music Director & Organist

Marty Easton, Bruton Development Director,
Cornerstone Circle Member, Bruton Member

Channing Hall III, Cornerstone Circle Member,
Attorney, Bruton Member

Marcia Hibbitts, Bruton Guide, Cornerstone Circle Member, Bruton Member

Valarie Holmes, Colonial Williamsburg Interpreter

Dr. James Horn, President
Jamestown Rediscovery

Dr. William Kelso, Director of Research
Jamestown Rediscovery (Emeritus)

Virginia Lee, Daughters of the American Revolution,
Bruton Member

Albert Louer, Charter Member, Cornerstone Circle Member, Bruton Member

Dr. Carl Lounsbury, Senior Architectural Historian
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (Emeritus)

The Rev’d Lauren McDonald, Associate Rector
Outreach & Women’s Ministry, Bruton Parish Church

The Hon. T. Montgomery “Monty” Mason
Senate of Virginia

Joe Poole, III, Director of Special Gifts
Colonial Williamsburg

W. Taylor Reveley, III, Former President
The College of William & Mary

Susan Riggs (Retired), Special Collections Assistant
William & Mary Libraries, Swem Special Collections

Scott M. Spence, Architect, Bruton Member

Joseph L. Spruill, Sons of the American Revolution, Bruton Member

Friends of Bruton Committee

The Rev’d Christopher L. Epperson, Rector

Bill Armbruster, Guide, Cornerstone Circle Member, Bruton Member

Donald Bogus, Charter Member, Cornerstone Circle Member, Bruton Member

Isabel Burch, Cornerstone Circle Member, Bruton Member

Lynn Clark, Cornerstone Circle Member, Bruton Member

Anne Conkling, Cornerstone Circle Member,
The Fount Editor, Bruton Member, Guide Trainer

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Steve Hibbitts, Treasurer, Cornerstone Circle Member, Bruton Member

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William O. Kafes, Cornerstone Circle Member,
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James C. Morford, Committee Chair,
Charter Member, Cornerstone Circle Member, Bruton Member

Joan Poland, Bruton Member

John (Griff) Steel, Bruton Member

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Vestry Liaisons, Bruton Members

Bruton Parish Church

The Most Rev’d Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop

The Rt. Rev’d Susan Bunton Haynes, Bishop
Diocese of Southern Virginia

The Rev’d Christopher L. Epperson, Rector

The Rev’d Lauren M. McDonald, Associate Rector - Outreach & Women’s Ministries

The Rev’d Charles H. Bauer, Associate Rector
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The Ven. Jan Brown, Archdeacon

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