

# Weekly news & updates for St. Paul's

Week of April 12, 2021 | Volume 15

## Upcoming Events for the week

- **April 14 - Noon Day Eucharist at Chapel 601 Union St. - In person - Masks required**
- **April 18 8:30 a.m. Sunday Zoom Forum**
- **April 18 10 a.m. Sunday Zoom Worship Service**

Garry Estep plays music on each of the five organs chosen to feature the best characteristics of that instrument. He also interviews Frans Bosman, local organ builder and tuner, before each selection. The finale is on St. Paul's 1905 Kimball organ, and he really "lets out the stops." Garry suggests viewers choose their favorite organ and make a donation to that church's "Organ Fund" to ensure the instruments can be maintained. I pick St. Paul's for my donation, and I'm betting you will, too!



Bob Carsner, originator of The Dalles Organ Crawl sits in front of an organ. Tap on blue box for the 2021 Organ Crawl. Copied from the web page of the American Guild of Organists. *Submitted by Julie Reynolds*

[The Dalles Organ Crawl video](#)

## Spring has sprung.



*Forsythia blooms at Riffe Lake, Washington*

**All that is eternal in me  
Welcomes the wonder of this day,  
The field of brightness it creates  
Offering time for each thing  
To arise and illuminate.**

**I place on the altar of dawn:  
The quiet loyalty of breath,  
The tent of thought where I shelter,  
Waves of desire I am shore to  
And all beauty drawn to the eye.**

**May I have the courage today  
To live the life that I would love,  
To postpone my dream no longer  
But do at last what I came here for  
And waste my heart on fear no more.**

*John O'Donohue: To Bless the Space  
Between Us, Pg. 9*



Clair West, Sean Kimsey and Diane Adams are part of the Neighborhood team.

## Neighborhood Team Garden Seed Giveaway

The neighborhood team has had a lot of fun lately! The Garden Seed Giveaway is still fresh in our minds. This event really helped the team see what is possible with regards to connecting with our neighbors. We had a diverse group of 25-30 people show up for free seeds and seedlings on Saturday, April 3. We met a family that lives within eyesight of the church, two couples who are new to the community, and one neighbor who was just looking for a fun activity to do with her daughter. Many of these neighbors took time to talk and ask questions about the church. Some of them plan to return with seedlings to plant in the church garden.



## Meet the Episcopal priest moonlighting as a Mars rover mission scientist

Pamela Conrad poses with the Mars Curiosity rover. Photo: NASA [Episcopal News Service]

When Episcopal News Service recently spoke to the Rev. Pamela Conrad, rector of **St. Alban's Episcopal Church** in Glen Burnie, Maryland, she was exhausted – but not only from the liturgical marathon of Holy Week or the weary slog of daily life during the COVID-19 pandemic. On top of that, Conrad is a member of the tactical operations team for **NASA's Mars rover mission**, often working through the night, analyzing feedback from the Perseverance rover as it searches for signs of potential life.

From her living room in Maryland, Conrad connects virtually with scientists around the country and at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Southern California for several shifts a week, monitoring sensors that she helped design as they transmit data about the Martian environment. Among the instruments she works with are the cameras that have sent back **over 25,000 photos**, including Perseverance's first selfie, which shows the rover and the small helicopter that is expected to take the first-ever powered flight on another planet later this week.

*The Perseverance rover took these photos of itself and the Ingenuity helicopter on April 6. Photo: NASA/JPL-Caltech/MSSS*

"Every time we get new images, it is such an amazing sense of awe," Conrad said.

Conrad, 68, has been working for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration since 1999

on projects including the **Curiosity rover**, which landed on Mars in 2012. Priesthood is a more recent vocation; she was ordained in 2017 and has continued her scientific work on the side since becoming a rector.

“My full-time job – and I’m very clear about this – is as a priest. And my second thing that I do is the science because the science informs my ministry as a priest,” Conrad said. She told ENS that the scientific and spiritual worlds have always been intertwined for her, united by a sense of wonder. From an early age, she remembers “being very in touch with the general concept of nature and God.”

“I think that the evolution of me as an explorer with respect to this world as well as other worlds, and also as an explorer of the vast spiritual landscape that’s internal, have both been present, always,” she said.

Conrad traces her interest in space exploration back to the night when she was a toddler and her father pointed out Sputnik – the first satellite launched into orbit – passing overhead, but she took a roundabout route through other professions before arriving at NASA. After training as a musician and working as a video producer, she pursued a graduate degree in geology, focusing on geobiology – the study of how life arises from planetary landscapes. That led to a job at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, where she applied her knowledge of geobiology to the search for life on Mars.

But all the while, Conrad was experiencing a parallel calling to return to The Episcopal Church, from which she had “run in horror” as a young woman. In the 1970s, when Conrad was in college and women’s ordination was a disputed issue, the rector of her church in was disciplined for allowing an irregularly ordained woman to celebrate the Eucharist.

“I just said, ‘You know, Jesus would never approve of business this way; I’m just going to go be a free agent.’ And that didn’t work because I kept getting this subtle call back to community, but I didn’t know how that should be manifest,” she recalled.

Two moments of epiphany gave her some clarity. On a trip to Antarctica, she stood and stared at a distant mountain range as the wind pounded her face and “felt all the anger that I had about the church just blow out of me. ... It was a road-to-Damascus moment.” Then, at a rally against **Proposition 8** – the 2008 California ballot initiative that banned same-sex marriage in the state – she was saddened by an encounter with anti-gay Christian protesters who were screaming in anger, along with their children.

“I remember thinking, ‘If I had stayed in the church, perhaps I could have been a voice of kindness and love and there wouldn’t be little children yelling,’” she told ENS. “That’s when I thought, ‘I’m going back to church, and I’m going to stay until I can develop my own leadership within the church.’”

At first, she worried what her scientific colleagues would think about her entering the ordination process, but it ended up confirming her call to ministry.

“I was afraid to tell them,” she said. “As it turns out, no one thought it was weird. In fact, they began to come to me in a pastoral sense. And I was surprised. That was a good lesson – that I should not prejudge people, and that we all have the need to connect in community, no matter how nerdy we are. ... I think you always deal with people on a pastoral basis, whether you’re relating to them on a science project or you’re relating to them in a congregation.”

Conrad is a firm believer in the harmony of science and faith – which she advocates through her leadership role in the North American province of the **Society of Ordained Scientists** – and sees the search for life on Mars as an affirmation of a God who exceeds human understanding.

“People often regard humans as the pinnacle of creation. We don’t want to consider the possibility that Mom doesn’t like us best,” she told ENS. “As Christians, what we have to ask ourselves is, If God can create life here, is God big enough to create life elsewhere? Of course, the answer is yes.”

Conrad also sees a role for The Episcopal Church in dispelling the myth that science and religion are incompatible, given its roots in the Anglican concept of faith informed by reason.

“In a time when people are discarding reason in favor of conspiracy theories, or suspicion of science, we can help,” she said. “And I believe that we are called to this moment to help reconcile those two perspectives so that we can ask ourselves, Why wouldn’t we use all the gifts in our disposal, all the processes of learning and knowing? And science is one of those processes.”

She also thinks the church is called to take a proactive approach to the ethics of interplanetary travel and colonization. Given the tragedies brought about by exploration and colonization on Earth, Conrad wants Christians to start thinking carefully about how the human race can ethically expand beyond Earth.

“How can we as a culture do a respectful job of exploring so that we can explore without exploiting?” she asked. “As we become poised to be an interplanetary species – and we will, because exploration is a biological imperative – will we take our Christian selves into that exploration? ... And we as beloved community can play a role in that by articulating it now before we lift off for Mars.”

– Egan Millard is an assistant editor and reporter for Episcopal News Service. He can be reached at [emillard@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:emillard@episcopalchurch.org).



## Fujimura on Faith and Art

Makoto Fujimura (b. 1960, Boston) is a leading contemporary artist whose process driven, refractive “slow art” has been described by David Brooks of the *New York Times* as “a small rebellion against the quickening of time.” Robert Kushner, in the mid 90’s, has written on Fujimura’s art in *Art in America* this way: “The idea of forging a new kind of art, about hope, healing, redemption, refuge, while maintaining visual sophistication

and intellectual integrity is a growing movement, one which finds Makoto Fujimura’s work at the vanguard.”

### How do you see your work as your calling?

I knew that my work as an artist was my calling before I was a Christian. You can’t really commoditize art. The pure artists feel called to do what they do despite enormous difficulties such as not being able to market their works or having an audience necessarily at that moment. This made more sense after I became a Christian, and I knew who called me and to what purpose. One of the things that I discuss in the book is how the process of creativity and the journey of faith overlap. In fact, I was part of a study group called the Faith and Work Group at Yale that examined: “Why is it that Sunday faith is not translated into Monday through Saturday?”

### What did you learn from that study group?

I wrote an essay in the book titled “Optimum Foraging Theory: Can You Have Your Birds and Eat Them Too?” It was based on the experience of our group touring the Tyson Factory and thinking through what it means to have a calling of some kind but also have a market reality.

### **As a Christian, how do you deal with the commercialized aspect of the art world?**

Recently, I have been writing in *Refractions* and on my blogs about the necessity for the market system in the art world to change into more of a hybrid system. Instead of being based purely on the celebrity-driven, ego-infested market system, it would really take into account one's creativity and the biblical paradigm of **Shalom prosperity**. That's different from just having market prosperity. God plans for us to be thriving in our creativity. Therefore, there has to be an over-arching system that accounts for that. While there are a few pockets of Shalom prosperity, currently, there is no system like that in place. The church should be one of the first places where that could be possible.

### **What do you think keeps the church from not being one of those places?**

I think it's bought into the commoditized system. It's driven by market desires and consumer mentality. We have big churches, which is not bad in itself, but with mall-like structures and 20th century evangelism, the church kind of turned itself into salesmanship of the gospel—where it can be bought or sold. And the person receiving the gospel is either buying it or not buying it. That's a problem in many ways, as we can imagine.

The ineffectiveness of our not being able to create that hybrid system leads to the gospel being boiled down to some level of commodity. As a church, we need to really reconsider this system by recreating our system and calling for systemic change.

### **How do you glorify God in your daily work?**

I glorify God by fulfilling my calling and being faithful in small things. But it's also about being willing to stand for my faith in certain ways. I do that by being authentic and integrating my faith journey with my art. I work with whoever I work with—whether it be a gallery or the whole system that is driven by a celebrity market system with ideologies that are somewhat opposed to biblical values—but I love the art world instead of disengaging from it.

*By Dan Clendenin. Posted 04 April 2021.*

From <https://makotofujimura.com/about>

---

## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES ...**



### **April Birthdays:**

- |    |                 |
|----|-----------------|
| 10 | Verna Browne    |
| 10 | John Hildebrand |
| 20 | Sandy Leibham   |

---

### **Please pray ...**

For your prayers: Peggy Davis, Skip & Carol Fisher, Bobbi Green, Ross Hucke, Don and Alice, Dale Newton, Ginger Crowley, Ruth Welle (Carol Yakish's sister), Sarah, Barbara Portwood, John Davis, Carol healing from lung cancer, Lorrie (friend of Alan Alford), Lee Keifer, Andrew

Larive, Melanie from Ascension, Stuart Foster (Jim Foster's son healing from a ski accident), Kathy Scarborough's cousin who has Covid, Mary who is suffering from ALS ( a friend of Amy McIlvenna), Pete Speight (Georgia Giacobbe's husband), Denise Beasley, the Jeff Krier family as they grieve his death, the Carolyn Thomas family as they grieve the loss of Griff Thomas, Sam Woolsey's family as they grieve the loss of Bill Martin and Doug Woolsey, and relief from the Covid-19 virus spread throughout the community and country, and our Nation. 4/11/21

---

*To submit articles or pictures for the weekly newsletter, please submit them by Friday. Some articles may be held over for the following issue due to immediacy and space. Your articles keep us smiling and feeling like a community. Thank you, Marilyn*

ST PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH | [www.stpaulsthealles.org](http://www.stpaulsthealles.org)