Faith Calling for Action

The Advocacy Booklet of the Faith & Action Committee

-Educating, Equipping, and Empowering Our Community –

Building New Horizons

FAITH & ACTION

March 2026

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

FAITH & ACTION

Dear Friends in Christ,

Our Faith & Action ministry continues to ask a simple but profound question:

How does our faith call us to serve our neighbors in tangible ways? One of the most enduring answers to that question has been St. Paul's long commitment to education in Richmond's East End. For nearly three decades, parishioners have walked alongside students, teachers, and families through partnerships with local schools, offering time, encouragement, and resources in support of young people seeking opportunity and hope.

In this newsletter and Sunday Forum, you will learn more about the ongoing work at Woodville Elementary School and the Armstrong Leadership Program.

These partnerships reflect the heart of our Faith & Action mission: building relationships, supporting community leadership, and helping create pathways for students to flourish. We are grateful for the many members of this parish who have

volunteered as mentors, reading buddies, tutors, and advocates over the years.

I invite you to read about the upcoming forum and consider how you might participate in this shared work!

Together, we continue to live out our calling to love our neighbors and seek the flourishing of our community.

Faithfully,

Florian+

Deacon

X+Y=?

Building New Horizons: What's New in Educational Efforts in Richmond's East End

For more than 28 years, St. Paul's has served children and uplifted educational efforts in the city's East End. Through our commitment, resources, and faith, we founded the Micah Initiative, a multi-faceted program that serves students in an under-resourced elementary school, which grew into a city-wide initiative.

For St. Paul's, we identified and partnered with Woodville Elementary School. Today, we are honored to support our expanded efforts, which now include the Armstrong Leadership Program. For more than 15 years, we have been honored to support high school students in Richmond's East End communities, along with continuing to serve Woodville. Over the years, our involvement with both schools has included tutoring, mentoring, Reading Buddies, Lunch Buddies, school event volunteers, holiday gifts, school supplies, summer camping experiences, and various academic enrichment opportunities.

During this Forum, we look forward to you joining in the conversation with the leadership at Woodville Elementary School and the Armstrong Leadership Program as they share and discuss how they are educating, encouraging, and empowering students in Richmond's East End.

Today, Woodville Elementary School serves students in grades kindergarten through 5th. Their mission is to be a vibrant community of promise to all, inspiring students to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens. And to provide challenging and engaging learning experiences, guided by highly qualified educators in partnership with their families, and the entire Richmond community.

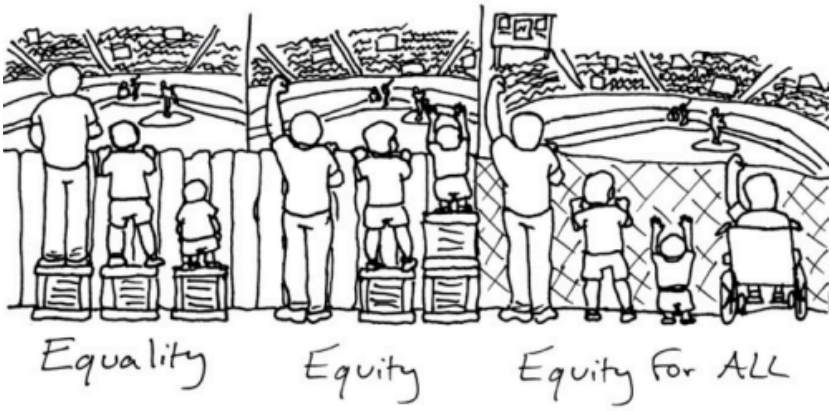
The Armstrong Leadership Program is focused on supporting students at Richmond's Armstrong High School, the first school founded in 1865, dedicated to the uplifting of freed African American students in Richmond. Now with over 160 years of educational excellence, the school has developed more inner-city youth than any other high school in the city of Richmond. The development of the Armstrong Leadership Program excels through the mission to challenge, develop, stimulate, and grow student leaders physically, mentally, emotionally, and

spiritually. The program, located in Richmond Hill, engages students to grow and develop in personal development, leadership training, cultural exposure, mentoring, and post-graduate preparation.

Our presenters will be Dr. Dava Allen Miller, Principal at Woodville Elementary School, and Hope Wilder, MSW Intern at the Armstrong Leadership Program. They will share what's on the immediate agenda for each program, along with recent program accomplishments, challenges, and how St. Paul's can be involved in building new horizons in education for our East End community.

We are looking forward to having this opportunity to learn more about how to get involved, explore opportunities to engage more deeply and meaningfully with these school communities, and provide support and resources for students, teachers, and families.

An exciting day for St. Paul's Episcopal Church as we continue to serve God, our communities, and put our faith into action.


Equality
Equity
Equity For ALL

Looking Beyond Richmond

Across the wider Episcopal Church, education is rightly understood as a matter of equity, justice, and opportunity in society. The national church and many dioceses have emphasized that access to quality education remains one of the most powerful determinants of a child's future, and that disparities in schools regularly reflect broader patterns of poverty, racial inequality, and historic disinvestment in communities. In response, Episcopal congregations across the country partner with public schools, support after-school and mentoring programs, advocate for fair educational funding, and work alongside community organizations to expand opportunities for students and families.

These commitments grow out of our baptismal promise to strive for justice and peace among all people and to respect the dignity of every human being. Educational partnerships - especially in communities that have long faced systemic barriers - become one way the Church participates in God's work of restoring dignity and possibility.

By supporting students, teachers, and families and advocating for more just educational systems, Episcopalians seek to ensure that every child has the opportunity to learn, grow, and flourish.

Gracious and loving God,

source of all wisdom and truth,
we give you thanks for the gift of learning and for all who dedicate themselves to the work of education.

Bless students everywhere - especially those who face obstacles of poverty, fear, or uncertainty.
Grant them curiosity to seek truth, courage to ask questions, and perseverance in their studies.
Surround them with encouragement and opportunity, that their gifts may grow and their futures be filled with hope.

Strengthen and sustain teachers, mentors, and all who guide young minds.
Give them patience, creativity, and compassion, that they may nurture not only knowledge but also dignity, confidence, and a love of learning.

We pray for our schools and communities, that they may become places of fairness, safety, and belonging for every child.

Guide leaders and citizens to pursue policies and partnerships that advance justice and educational opportunity for all.

Make us mindful of our own calling to support and uplift the next generation,
that through our care and commitment, every student may flourish.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, who welcomed children and taught with wisdom and grace.

Amen.