

CONTINUING OUR IMPORTANT WORK

“My wish for you is that you continue. Continue to be who and how you are, to astonish a mean world with your acts of kindness. Continue to allow humor to lighten the burden of your tender heart.... And by doing so, you and your work will be able to continue. Eternally.” — MAYA ANGELOU



This summer I came across Maya Angelou’s poem “Continue.” It resonates so powerfully with me as I go about my life and work on The Hill that I have kept a copy on my desk, within arm’s reach, in my office. For me, this poem has been a timely and timeless reminder.

As a head of school, I spend a fair amount of time looking forward, imagining what St. Stephen’s should be in the future. Our current strategic plan, Spark 2023, guides us in thinking about the school community that we want to be by the year 2023. A recent campus master plan project also has guided many members of the faculty to imagine how our programs might grow in the next two decades and what facilities we should construct in the next 20 years to support student programs and community life.

Such future-focused work is critical for school communities that strive to grow and strengthen the impact they have on the world. But so, too, is the process of reminding ourselves who we have been as a school and what enduring ways of being remain essential to our campus life and culture.

The year 2020 marks the 70th year of St. Stephen’s Episcopal School. Throughout this academic year, I have found myself reflecting on our school’s remarkable history of educating Spartans who care for others and the world. In a community like ours, in which our foundational values and traditions of excellence still prevail, it is exciting to acknowledge that what we always have done is worthy of being preserved, if not treasured, today and beyond.

I trust that you will find that we, in the spirit of Angelou’s poem, continue to uphold much of what always has been at the heart of the St. Stephen’s experience. I hope that while you read about our current and future sustainability initiatives you will see that in many ways, we carry on the bold vision of the Rt. Rev. John Hines and other early founders. Hines would be pleased to know that our dedication to the recovery of humans continues. While that may look a bit different today, as we move into our 70th academic school year, we continue to be a school community that does this important work one day and one Spartan at a time.

—CHRISTOPHER L. GUNNIN, HEAD OF SCHOOL