

ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE

February 2008

Dear Friends,

The day before Ash Wednesday is called *SHROVE TUESDAY*. To “shrive” means to confess and obtain forgiveness of sins in preparation for Lent. This tradition of the Christian church is over 1000 years old. At the same time as people attended to the cleansing of their souls, they also focused on prayer, fasting and alms giving. These ways of living are explained by Jesus in Matthew’s Gospel that we hear on Ash Wednesday.

One way that people responded to the mandate to fast was that during Lent they would not eat any rich food, so their houses were “cleansed” “shriven” of fats, sugars, butter, grease, etc. These foods would not be eaten during the forty days of Lent. One of the best ways to rid the home of these rich foods was to make pancakes on the day before the fast began on Ash Wednesday. During Lent people ate plain food every day except Sundays which are not included in the fasting period of Lent. Sundays are considered celebratory at all times because each Sunday is a celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Christian Church has celebrated this period of preparation for the crucifixion, death and Resurrection of Jesus from its earliest days. These forty days, with the exception of Sundays, is a time for us to reflect and take stock of our lives. It is a time that is modeled by Jesus’ time in the desert as he fasted and wondered about his life and mission.

In our younger days we were always encouraged to “give up something for Lent.” Candy, cake, chocolate, movies, use of colorful language, ice cream, and cookies were some of the things I remember we would decide to deny ourselves. We really didn’t know the point of it. So it just became a contest of wills among us.

But now I know what fasting from something we like is about. If we abstain from an activity that we love (watching football (what did he say?), golfing, eating a specific food, etc.) it can create a space in our being in which God can enter during those times of reflection in Lent. It is about depriving ourselves of one special thing in order that a greater thing can enter our spirit—the knowledge and understanding of the deep and totally committed love of God.

Whether we fast or not, these days of Lent provide us a time to prepare for the holiest days of the church year: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday. Try to spend at least five or ten minutes each day contemplating what our God has done for us in the life, death and Resurrection of Jesus. During Lent, and everyday, be reminded of the magnitude of God’s love for you.

Catechesis Corner



It's been good to get back into the routine of classes after the fun of the pageant. In the season of Epiphany, very short this year, we have finished up the Nativity stories (the visitation of the Magi, and presentation of baby Jesus in the temple), and presented some new parables and stories of the Good Shepherd.

In February, it's back to purple linens again for Lent. This means we get to begin the Easter stories, such as the Last Supper, and work with our big wooden 'City of Jerusalem' model. Catechesis II will be making a 'Lenten Garden'.

Parents please note that, in a change from the usual schedule, **Family Sunday will be on February 10th this month. We will have class on February 3rd. Also, we will NOT have any classes on February 17th (President's Day weekend).**

Many thanks as always to the large roster of adults and youth contributing to the program again this session. Hopefully we haven't had to overload anyone as a result.

Sincerely,

Amanda Hubbard and Ellen Ryan

Elementary Sunday School News



Our Elementary Sunday school community celebrated Advent patiently waiting for Jesus' birth. The 1-3rd grade class counted the days using an Advent calendar they created. Each day opened to reveal a new page in the story of Jesus' birth. The 4-5th grade class counted weeks lighting candles on their Advent wreaths. As Christmas approached, we shared the story of the Nativity. The 4-5th grade class learned about St. Francis and his celebration of Christmas making individual popsicle stick crèches to take home. Epiphany brought the entire Sunday school community together to tell the story of Jesus birth in our annual Christmas pageant. Thank you Ellen Ryan, Natalie Wicks and everyone who supported them to make this a favorite treasured memory for so many in our community. Throughout Epiphany we say Alleluia to thank God for sending Jesus to us. Throughout the season, the children will adorn the church with colorful Alleluias. During our Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, February 5th, the children will take down the Alleluias, storing them for Lent. Most recently, our 4-5th grade class spent a day learning about Jesus' baptism and enjoying a discussion of John the Baptist's unusual lifestyle. His dining on Locust was a big hit.

This week we begin session 3 in our Sunday school calendar. Thank you to all the teachers who taught in the second session. Thanks to Chris Thompson, Stacy Schalick, Nicky Blackburn, Susan Adamick, Becky Ricci, Liz DeRose, Tina Blackburn, Andrea Hayes, Andre Barber, Amanda Hubbard, and Ellen Ryan.

We do have a few dates to note this month:

Feb. 3	Will not be a family service. We will have Sunday school.
Feb. 5	Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinner. The children are invited to help take down and store the Alleluias for Lent.
Feb. 10	Family service.
Feb. 17	No Sunday school - this is the beginning of the Bedford School's February break
Mar. 13	Sunday School Planning meeting for session 4 - 7:30 PM (Thursday)

Cathy Presti

Middle School Youth Group Update

We finished off 2007 in style: if you saw kids walking around at the Advent Fair with a new tattoo, a Christmas tree or snowman on their cheek, or a red Rudolph nose, you knew that they had visited the middle school youth group room at the Advent Fair!

We had fun providing face-painting and temporary tattoos and plan to do it again next year. Although the big snowstorm derailed our Christmas caroling adventure, Mrs. Mathews, Paul Ciaccia and Frank delivered our Christmas cookies. All parishioners who received them were delighted and appreciative of the wonderful holiday gift. On January 6th, you saw many of our smiling faces as we participated in the annual in the Christmas pageant...better late than never!

This month, we will meet for our first in-class discussion of the year on February 3rd and chat about the impact of cell phones, emails, IM'ing and texting on friendships, home life and school.

On Wednesday, February 13, we will meet to bake a Valentine's Day-themed dessert for the Bedford Community Table. Chuck is reportedly planning an all-red food menu so we will do our best to compliment his feast! Other activities in the planning stage include a snow-tubing trip to Nashoba Valley and a movie night.

Please watch your email and be sure to respond with your interest and date availability!

Carrie Mathews and Suzanne Johnson

High School Youth

On January 13th, the high school youth got up VERY early to visit Father Dan at his new parish, St. Andrew's in Manchester, New Hampshire. Our group -- four Mitchells, plus Ariana and Bruce Seymourian, and Becky and Tommy Waghorne -- was well fortified with donuts and, after a wrong turn blamed on Google Maps, made it to the church just as the opening hymn was starting. The service was friendly and warm, and we were grateful to be a part of the St. Andrew's family that day. Dan sends his regards to all.

Lent begins this month, and the high school youth will be baking pretzels for coffee hour to coincide with the fourth Sunday of Lent, March 2. (We had originally discussed baking communion bread, but decided it could be too messy.) Please watch your email for more details on the when and where of baking.

Emily and John Mitchell

News from St. Paul's Weekday Nursery School



We returned to school after the holidays, like many folks excited about new gifts. Again, through the "Wish List" compiled by teachers, the parents bought or supplied items for the children and classrooms. New CD players and CD's, arts & craft supplies including a glue gun (!), Fisher Price castle, pirate ships and accessories – found on e-bay, more pieces for the again popular "Mr. Potato Head", a collapsible child – size table, and more kitchen towels, pans, bowls, mixing & measuring cups and all the ingredients to make our ever-popular playdough. We are very grateful for such generosity.

It is also nice to know that we remembered others outside of school, through our gifts to Central Food Ministry in Lowell. Bagfuls of hats, gloves & mittens, scarves will help keep families warmer this winter.

Snow has cancelled two days so far, but sure makes for a nice New England play diversion in the backyard when we do get outside.

Registration is open for next year's classes, September 2008 -2009. If you know someone looking or would like information, the opportunity to visit, please call Beth Taylor at 781-275-1383.

Vestry News

If you've ever spent more than a few minutes talking to John MacPhee, you know he's got a wicked sense of humor. But that's not all there is to John: he and his family have been attending St. Paul's for over five years, and in that time they've become active and vital members of our parish.

John grew up in Arlington, and moved to Marblehead as an adult with his wife, Sue. They were active members of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church there, serving on the stewardship (John) and property (Sue) committees, among other activities. As the CFO for E-Dialog, a technology marketing company, John commuted to the Bedford/Lexington area for many years before finally taking the plunge and moving to Bedford in 2000; his new commute, he says, "is a dream."

When they moved to Bedford, the MacPhees had one son, Jack (now 9). After living here for a couple years and adding Ian (now 6) to the family, they decided it was time to get back to church. John and Sue decided to start church shopping. St. Paul's was their first stop—"and then we stopped," John says. He credits the warm and comfortable environment here for convincing them to become members. "We got jumped at coffee hour by a bunch of folks who made us feel very welcome." Ian MacPhee was baptized here at age two ("he walked up to the font," notes John, "because he was a little too big for Frank to pick up"), and daughter Sally Ann (now almost 3) made her stage debut as an infant in the 2005 production of *St. Paul's TONIGHT!*.

In addition to serving on the vestry for the past year, John has been active in the men's group, the property committee, and the Advent Fair. His extracurricular activities are largely kid-centric and involve the outdoors. "We like to be outside as much as we can be," he says, and cites hiking, baseball, T-ball, youth soccer, and basketball as some of the family's favorites activities.

In John's garage is the same Harley he bought when he was 24. He and Sue love to ride and used to ride a lot, but now, he says, "I take it out twice a year: once to drive it to be inspected, and once to run out the gas before I put it away for the winter."

We are blessed and grateful to have John MacPhee as a member of the vestry and of St. Paul's.



Stewardship Corner

THANK YOU! The phrase may be overused, but the sentiment is heartfelt. The Stewardship Committee is grateful to all the members and friends of our parish who have supported our efforts to be faithful stewards of the time, talent, and treasure we share at St. Paul's.

First, tremendous thanks to everyone who pledged during our fall pledge drive. Your generosity resulted in our highest-ever pledge total (\$147,388) and our highest participation rate (92%). We are still accepting pledge cards for 2008, of course: if you need a card or have any questions, please see Paul Ciaccia or any member of the committee.

We also want to extend our thanks to everyone who has contributed so far during our ongoing Light Bulb Drive. We received enough donations to replace all of the standard bulbs in the library and narthex with energy-efficient compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs). We also sold a number of CFLs for home use. Most importantly, the bulbs we have sold represent energy savings of 3716 watts: a great step toward reducing our overall impact on the environment. We will continue to sell bulbs at coffee hour for the next few weeks, so if you haven't yet tried out the new bulbs at your house, you still have a chance.

Please note: CFLs do contain a small amount of mercury, and as such should be disposed in a hazardous waste facility. These bulbs last much longer than traditional bulbs, however, so it will likely be several years before you need to replace yours. Billerica has a drop-off program, where you can drop off your used CFLs in a safe place until hazardous waste collection days. Bedford does not yet have such a program, but by the time your bulbs burn out, it may (Peter Ricci is currently working on the issue through the Board of Health).

Once again, THANK YOU, one and all, for being enthusiastic and responsible stewards of St. Paul's resources.

--	--

OUTREACH NEWS

A Valentine Dinner for Bedford Community Table

Celebrate your love for others by helping provide a dinner on Valentine's Day, February 14 for our local food pantry, Bedford Community Table. Adults are needed to help prepare the meal in the afternoon and to help serve in the evening. For more information, contact Jan Blake.



Planning for Girl Scout Sunday

On Sunday, February 10 there will be a meeting in the library after church for all Girl Scouts, past and present who would like to help plan Girl Scout Sunday on March 9. Plans will include assigning roles during the service and choosing a service project. For more information contact Caroline Larson.

Help Build a Habitat Home in Bedford

At coffee hour on Sunday, March 2, St. Paul's will host a "Buy A Board" sale for the Bedford Habitat for Humanity Project. Purchase a 2x4 and decorate it with a personal message. These boards will be used for framing, so your message becomes a part of a new home in Bedford. Your contribution enables a family to afford the home and your message of encouragement is appreciated by the family and volunteers who work on the home. For more information contact John Mitchell.



TAB TOP PROGRAM



Keep those tab tops coming! As reported before, tabs are sent to the Shriner's Burn Hospital, which in turn are combined with other organizations tabs. The tabs contain metal in which the Shriner's Hospital extract and sell. As of now, the parents incur debts when they stay at various hotels to be near their children, who are in the Shriner's Hospital. All proceeds are used to help pay bills for these families.

So far I have estimated that I have turned in to the Shriner's Hospital at least two thousand pounds of tabs.

Thank You.
Edward Lawrence



COMMUNITY TABLE DATES 2007-2008

February 14th – 2008
May 15th - 2008



How often do you use search engines on the Internet? More than you ever thought? Well, all those searches can help raise money for St. Paul's! How??? You ask???? Well, check out goodsearch.com. Our church is registered with this search engine and every time you search a few pennies will be donated to the church. Just go to goodsearch.com, choose "St. Paul's Episcopal Church (Bedford, MA)" from a scroll down menu and remember to use this search engine when you are looking for a site on the Web. In December, we will receive a check. It is as easy as that!!! Goodsearch is connected to Yahoo, so the searches are reliable.

Save the Date!



Please join the women of St. Paul's Church on Sunday, **April 6, 2008** at Noon for our Annual Brunch at the home of Sue Runkle.

All women of the parish are welcome at this annual event.



May 17, 2008
at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul

Classes will begin January 6th 2008 after church.

Any young people in grades nine or above, and any baptized adults interested in receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation, please contact Frank.

Save the Date!



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
February 5th @ 6:00 p.m.

All Parishioners and families
invited
No Charge

Mark your Calendar!

ADVENT FAIR FOLLOW-UP MEETING

Please come to an Advent Fair follow-up meeting on Monday evening, **February 11th** in the church library at 7:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served. We encourage all table chairpersons, committee members, and volunteers to come and voice their opinions, suggestions, etc. about this year's fair. We welcome any and everyone, new or old to the church, to attend and get involved!!

Many thanks, Lisa Hafer and Betsey Anderson,
Co-Chairs, Advent Fair



Pageant

Thank You!

Thank you to all our pageant participants for the fantastic job! A special thank you to the families for the flexibility and help especially with all the rehearsal and date changes! A special thank you to Natalie Wicks – my pageant partner! Couldn't and wouldn't do it without you.

Ellen Ryan

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church
100 Pine Hill Road
Bedford, MA 01730**

**Non-profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Bedford MA 01730
Permit No. 11**

Sunday Service of Holy Eucharist: 10:00 a.m.

Office hours: Tuesday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Telephone: 781 275-8262

Fax: 781 687-9070

E-mail: info@stpaulsbedford.org

Staff:

The Reverend Francis Fornaro, Rector
The Reverend Michael Hamilton, Deacon
Tracy Lane, Parish Administrator
Joan Reddy, Music Director
Bob Godoy, Sexton

Officers:

Ron Presti, Senior Warden
Emily Mitchell, Junior Warden
Betsey Anderson, Treasurer
Carol Hokana, Clerk

Vestry:

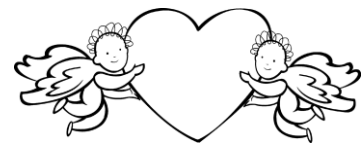
Sharon Keane Peter Ricci
Paul Kruger Sue Runkle
John MacPhee
Heather Marasa
Carrie Mathews

A Prayer for Lent

O God, you claim me as your partner,
respecting me,
trusting me,
tussling with me.
Support me
as I dare to be vulnerable with you,
encourage me
as I dare to take risks with you,
so together we can transform the world.
Amen.

Bridget Rees

February 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	



Unscramble

the words to find things to do to have an abundant life.

1. keam a itgf _____
2. ktea a wlka _____
3. gnis a nsgo _____
4. od a ikdn eded _____
5. mreimzoe citreuprs _____
6. phle eeonsom _____
7. lcla a sloomnee nroesp _____
8. arde hte bBeil _____
9. rpya orf osoemen _____
10. iertw a epmo _____

Answers: Make a gift, take a walk, sing a song, do a kind deed, memorize scripture, help someone, call a lonesome person, read the Bible, pray for someone, write a poem

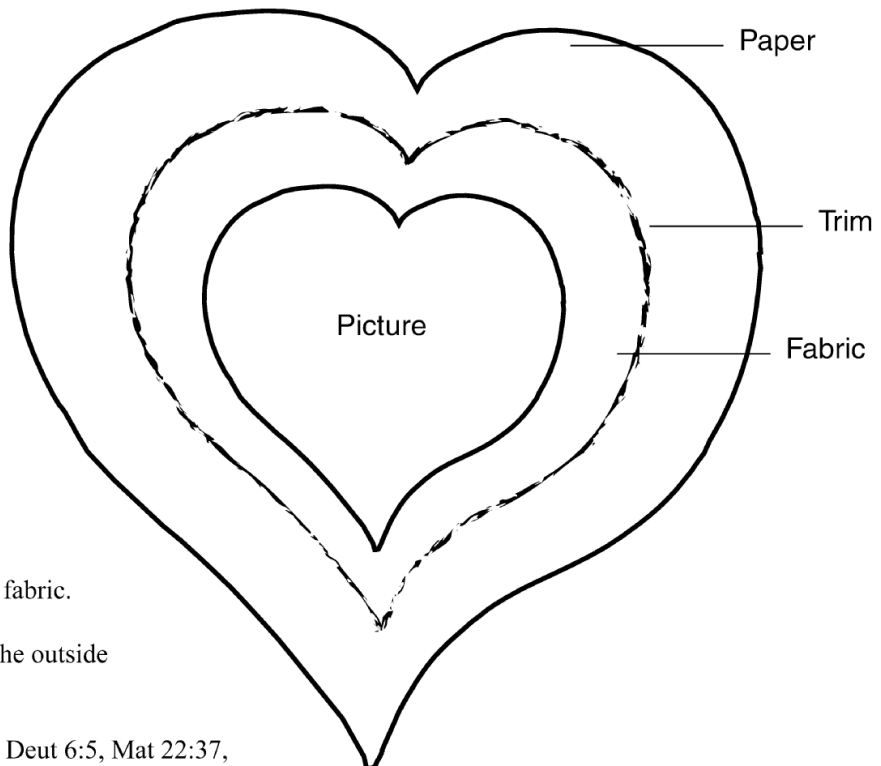
Make a Valentine

Be sure to ask permission to use these materials:

1. Stiff paper
2. Red fabric
3. **Trim:** lace, braid, yarn, etc.
4. **Picture:** you with the person you are sending the Valentine to or a nice picture from a magazine
5. Scissors, glue, pen

Instructions:

1. Cut out the heart from paper.
2. On the back side write a message to your Valentine. It could be a Bible verse about love.
3. Cut out a smaller heart from fabric and glue it to the front side of the paper.
4. Cut a picture to fit inside the fabric. Glue it to the fabric.
5. If desired, glue trim around the outside edge of the fabric.



Some Bible verses about love: Deut 6:5, Mat 22:37, Rom 13:8, 1 Cor 8:3