



ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE

May 2009

Dear Friends,

We are still in Eastertide. We are still being reminded of Jesus' Resurrection, His commitment to be with us forever and His gift of eternal life that we all inherit now. Every Sunday during the year we celebrate this great gift of God, Jesus our brother, the human aspect of God in our lives.

We are fortunate in the Northeast to have this celebratory time coincide with springtime. Nature is awakening all around us and it gives us an opportunity to experience in all our senses the rebirth of the earth. Birds who have been away are returning with their new songs. Warm breezes that seem to have visited other places return to free us from the confinement of homes and coats and scarves; we are freed from those bindings. The trees and plants that have lain dormant are again visible in all their glory to us. As we touch the petals of flowers that intrigue us, we somehow connect with the whole of God's creation. It causes us to sing.

As I think about springtime this year I am imagining what God is trying to tell us about God's self and about us. We learn so much about God in the life of Jesus. We are certain of God's compassion, care and love for all creation. We are humbled by God's own humility through His willingness to become human. We are assured, without doubt, that life everlasting is a gift we have all been given in the restorative power of the Resurrection.

But what is spring? What does it say to us about God? It is a further sign of God's unrelenting desire for newness and second chances and third, fourth and so on. Spring reminds us that God is always willing to start over, to begin again. Spring is a sign that God will always bring a new light to shine on us. The light shows us God's hope for us, God's hope that we are also compassionate, caring and loving, and that we have humility before God's power of love for us.

As we move towards the feast of the Ascension of Jesus we are reminded that God became exactly like us in Jesus Christ. And through the relationship of Jesus and humanity, Jesus brings all that we are to the throne of God. We are carried to heaven with Jesus; in Him we are present at the throne of God. Through God's love of Christ we receive that same love. Unconditional Love! It is through that Love that we are constantly created, made new, opened to new life, new joys, and new possibilities.

Love, Eternal Life, Beauty of the world, our own beauty in the sight of God, new beginnings, new revelations, new sacred gifts, all these things and more are given to us in the Resurrection of Jesus, in the eternal springtime of our lives.

Happy Eastertide, Happy Spring.

Elementary Sunday School

April was a short Sunday school month having only two Sunday school classes. The children in the first to third grade class had a lot of fun listening to the story of Noah. They built an arc, filled it with animals then set it afloat. Playing with a flashlight, they created their own rainbows and remembered God's promise to care for us. They also made doggie treats to share with our needy four legged friends at the MSPCA in Methuen. On the first Sunday of Lent, the children prepared a bed of paper-whites. They grew and came into bloom just in time to offer them to be used in the garden of repose this year. Through Lent, the fourth and fifth grade class learned of Jesus' last days with us by acting out the Passion with puppets. On Palm Sunday they offered their puppet presentation of the Passion to the first to third grade class.

Our last day of Sunday school this year will be on Pentecost, Sunday May 31st. In celebration of the Holy Spirit, I hope to gather the children at a local ball field to fly kites for an hour or so shortly after coffee hour. Volunteers are needed to lead this brief gathering. Please contact me if you are interested in helping out. I'd like to thank all the Sunday school teachers who have been so gracious with their time, love, energy and support this year. Thank you to all our teachers: Chris Thompson, Nicky Blackburn, Dori Pulizzi, Sima Seymourian, Susan Adamik, Shanie George, Mary Curlew, Becky Ricci, Stacy Schalick, Natalie Wicks, Carol Wait, Lisa Hafer, Deborah Regan, Shanie George, Tina Blackburn, Andrea Hayes, Eric Wicks, Elle Thompson and Ron Presti. Thank you to all our volunteers who have led the gathering singing: Ellen Ryan, Amanda Hubbard, John Mitchell, and Carolyn Martin. I'd also like to thank Louisa Saladino-Kuhl for writing an Epiphany skit for the children.

Cathy Presti



High School Youth

Come celebrate Youth Sunday on Mother's Day, May 10, with the high school and middle school youth. This is our most visible event of the year, when the young people of St. Paul's participate in all aspects of the regular worship service -- reading, serving on the altar, ushering, greeting, providing special music, and preaching.

Youth Sunday comes at a busy time this year, and we hope you all will once again show your support to the youth members of our parish family. They are old hands at this now, and we're very proud of the wonderful job they do.

The rite of Confirmation will be celebrated at the Church of the Redeemer in Lexington on Saturday, May 30, at 10:00am. Three youth members of St. Paul's will be confirmed: Tommy Waghorne, Elle Thompson, and Helen Kissel. Emily Mitchell and Jeff Zwicker will also be received into the Episcopal Church at the same ceremony. Bishop Bud Cederholm will preside.

We encourage everyone to attend the service to support our young people. The warmth and guidance our St. Paul's family has shown our confirmands throughout their lives is one of the most important reasons they have chosen to be confirmed. We look forward to a large St. Paul's contingent at Redeemer on the 30th.

John & Emily Mitchell

Middle School Youth Group Update

We hope all the children of our parish enjoyed the first annual St. Paul's Easter Egg Hunt - we had a great time organizing it! Special thanks to Briana Champion, Cassie Baker, Austen Sharpe, Emma Healey, Alex Healey, Miranda Keane, Aisling Keane, Natalie Schalick, Shea Kuhl, and Ben Johnson for their help in stuffing the eggs with assorted candy and quarters, finding creative places to hide the eggs, and organizing the different groups of children. An extra special thanks to Suzanne and Ben Johnson for coming early on Easter morning to hide the eggs outside, and to Wendy and Paul Ciaccia for their contributions. We are excited to start this tradition and look forward to next year!

The next in-class discussion will be held on Sunday, May 3rd in the library.

Lastly, we encourage everyone to attend St. Paul's Tonight on May 9th and May 10th to see members of the Youth Group both on-stage and behind the scenes!!

Carrie Mathews and Suzanne Johnson



On Saturday, **June 6, at 10:00** at the Cathedral downtown, Matt Kruger will be ordained to the diaconate. This is the first step on the path of ordained ministry, and is the first time a member of St. Paul's has been lifted up to this type of ministry within our diocese. Please join with Matt as he prepares for his new life in Christ as a deacon in the Episcopal Church. We are all tremendously proud of him.

Vestry Corner

The next vestry meeting will be Tuesday, May 19, at 7:30pm. All are welcome to attend. The Executive Committee will meet Tuesday, May 12, at 6:30pm.

Vestry Goals

Every year the vestry sets out specific goals for itself and for the parish. At our April meeting, the vestry approved the following goals for this year:

I. CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

- a. Sustain parish growth
- b. Improve committee structure and directives
- c. Support fellowship and spiritual life

II. FINANCIAL HEALTH AND STABILITY

- a. Promote St. Paul's as a worthwhile mission
- b. Plan for long-range capital projects

III. COMMUNICATION WITH THE PARISH

- a. Explore new ways to handle announcements
- b. Expand/modify Vestry Corner in Epistle
- c. Embrace the Web more fully

The goals are broad, but provide guidance to the vestry as we plan the program year and respond to the needs and concerns of the parish. We invite you all to read and reflect on these goals, and let us know if you have comments or questions. Any member of the vestry is happy to hear from you.

Also at our April meeting, the vestry approved sending a portion of our Holy Week and Easter offerings to mission work around the world. The Good Friday offering will be sent to the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem, as is customary in our diocese. A portion of the Easter offering will be sent to the Al Alhi Hospital in Gaza, an institution of the Diocese of Jerusalem.

OUTREACH NEWS

News from Moving Mountains China

Dear St. Paul's and Girl Scouts,

"There is an exceptionally bright young girl in southern China who has no idea how lucky she is. She will be taking her high school entrance exam in July and by August she will learn that all of her hard work has paid off. She will have scored in the top of her class and will be accepted into the best High School in her country. Her excitement will be tempered by concern. How would her family be able to afford the tuition? In September she will learn that you have provided a scholarship for her to continue her education and have given her the opportunity to change her life! On behalf of that young student xie xie (thank you) for your generous donation of \$300.

Sincerely, *Kimberly A Jodoin, Moving Mountains China*

For more information on Moving Mountains China contact Carol Hokana.



Habitat events coming up

Women Build 2009 – May 5-9

Sign up to help with construction at the Bedford North Road site. This unique Habitat event focuses on empowering women to take an active role to change their community together.



Hike for Humanity

Coming up May 30 and 31, participants gather pledges of money from sponsors and then hike to fulfill their pledges. They can choose when to hike (May 30 or 31 and where (Mt. Monadnock, Jaffrey, NH or Blue Hills Reserve, Milton, MA). Each hike covers about 3 miles of trails over moderate terrain. Alternate routes are available for those who do not wish to hike to the top. Dogs are welcome at the Blue Hills.

Mother's Day cards

Why not honor or remember your mother this year by making a contribution in her name to Women Build 2009? Habitat of Greater Lowell will send your mother a special card acknowledging your gift.

For more information on all these events log on to <http://www.lowellhabitat.org/news.htm>

Linus Blanket blessings May 3

It's that time again! We will display and bless the Linus blankets that have been carefully crafted all year by our St. Paul's knitters, crocheters and quilters.

Notes from the Nursery School

The month of May brings the end of the nursery school year. We have many activities planned to celebrate the month. We will watch caterpillars turn into butterflies and set them free. The children are working on their Mother's Day gift. We have planted seeds and are growing beans and other plants. We are working on some Wild West activities as that is the theme of our end of the school year picnic.

Enrollment for next year is looking good. There are only two openings left in the two day program. The five day program is full. We still have openings in the three day program but have had several families interested in that program in recent weeks so perhaps they will apply.

I want to thank the members of the church for all the support I have received my first year as the director. I have enjoyed meeting many of you and look forward to working with everyone again next year. Enjoy the summer!

Lee Frank

Thrift Sale

The Thrift Sale is coming! The Thrift Sale is coming!

Date: Saturday, June 20th

Time: 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

St. Paul's thrift sale is a fun way to perform a vital service to our members, our budget, our community and our environment. Think of the thrift sale while you're doing your spring-cleaning. Look for more details in next month's Epistle. Leaders are still needed in many areas. If you are willing to lead a table/section at the sale, contact me.

Faithfully,
Ron Presti

New Garden



I hope that everyone has seen the new garden that was completed just before Easter. It is a beautiful sight and certainly makes the entrance to St Paul's more welcoming. Also, the new pathway to the Memorial Garden was installed adding some definition to the side of the Church. St Paul's is very grateful to the individuals who donated the money to make this happen.

Thanks ,
Paul Ciaccia, Jr Warden.



Have you made a switch on the church calendar?

Attention acolytes, torchbearers, readers, lay ministers, greeters, and ushers! A schedule is posted inside the closet door of the far left altar server closet in the library. If you switch responsibilities with someone else, please mark the calendar so we know who is assigned each Sunday.

Church Clean Up



Many thanks to all who worked so diligently on April 4th to clean up the gardens, spread mulch and clear off the parking lot. We had over 20 people show up for the clean up and it saved St Paul's over \$700 .

Thanks,
The Vestry



Overture! Curtain! Lights! This is it -- we'll hit the heights!

We've been practicing for months, and now the SHOW is finally here! ST. PAUL'S TONIGHT! 2009 will be performed Saturday, May 9, at 7:30pm, and Sunday, May 10, at 3:00pm, at the JGMS Auditorium. Tickets are \$10 (\$8 students and seniors) and can be purchased at the door or in advance from any cast member. See Betsey Anderson for ticket information.

If you are in the show, BREAK A LEG! This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the great fellowship we share at St. Paul's. Other people in Bedford and the surrounding communities now know us by our kicklines and (if grocery-store-aisle gossip is any indication) are looking forward to this year's show.

If you are a prospective audience member, BRING YOUR FRIENDS! This is our second-biggest fundraiser of the year. All the money we raise from the show supports St. Paul's, from our operating budget to mission work to unexpected expenses. Plus, it's a really fun night (or day) out!

We hope to see you there!

Share your news with the parish!

Just a reminder that each month we would like to publish any news that parishioners may want to share with the parish. It could be a graduation, engagement, wedding, new born baby, personal achievement, etc..

Please e-mail your entry to info@stpaulsbedford.org titled "Epistle Entry" on or before the 20th of the month. Your entry will be entered in the following month's Edition. Please keep your entry to 25 words or less. Thanks!

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**Non-profit
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Paul Ciaccia, Junior Warden

Betsey Anderson, Treasurer

Carol Hokana, Clerk

Vestry:

Andre Barber

Sue Runkle

Sharon Healey

Natalie Wicks

John MacPhee

Heather Marasa

Dori Pulizzi

We pray

Can we imagine a world without color,
a world without the grace of blue, the life of green?

We give thanks for eyes that see, for the sublime gift of beauty.

Praised is Adonai, for the rainbow's brilliant colors.

Can we imagine a world without sound,
never knowing the joy of song?

We give thanks for words that speak to the mind,
for songs of joy and of sorrow,
and for souls that know how to listen.

Praised is Adonai, whose strength and might pervade the world.

Can we imagine a world without law,
where flowing of tide or coming of dawn could not be counted on?

We give thanks for the wondrous order that governs the stars and dust,
and our own heart's beating.

Praise is Adonai, creative source of all being.

Can we imagine a world without love,
where the spirit is confined in the prison of self?

We give thanks for the Godlike spirit within us we call love,
which binds life to life and heart to heart.

Praised is Adonai, whose spirit is shared with all humankind.

From *Shir Ha-Lev*, Song of the

