

ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE

Dear Friends,

It's Thanksgiving Month in the United States and there are so many things for which we can be thankful. We are striving to be a country whose strength is derived from the diversity which is a hallmark of our founding. People have come to this land from so many different places and their particular gifts continue to make us unique in the world.

We strive to be a place of welcome, peace and justice for all people in and out of our borders. We have an abundance of resources, skills and opportunities to share. Thanksgiving Day is not a religious holiday. It was proclaimed by President Lincoln as a national holiday and yet for him and the country it was a day to thank God for the many blessings the country enjoyed even in the midst of the strife torn life of the Civil War.

Today we thank God for our family, friends and all those we love and who love us. We thank God for safety and security and for the people who strive to make the world better for all people. There are so many of them! We thank God for our parents who nurtured us in so many ways, our spouses, our brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, children, grandchildren and all our families. We thank God for those people who are public figures whose compassion changes the world—people like Theresa of Calcutta, Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr. Paul Farmer, Bishop Desmond Tutu, all those people who volunteer in times of crisis and catastrophe, those who work to build and provide housing for others, those whose lives are dedicated to bringing justice and peace in any part of the world where those do not exist and on and on. We pray in thanksgiving for all the efforts of all people to bring God's dream of the peaceable kingdom to reality. Small acts of compassion and huge acts of compassion all matter equally in God's economy of goodness.

We are all given the gift of deciding. It is one important way we are made in God's image. Only human beings have the capacity to make informed, intellectual decisions. It was brought home to me in a new way this week when I saw one of Mozart's infrequently produced operas, *La Clemenza di Tito*. It was the story of a Roman Emperor whose whole circle of close friends betrays him and plots to assassinate him for reasons of jealousy, misplaced loyalty and misguided desires. In the end when the Emperor discovers that his best friend and his intended bride are behind the plot against him he is asked to sign a declaration condemning them to death as was decided by the Senate. He agonizes over this decision. In the end he chooses clemency and compassion. He pardons everyone involved. And the whole country rejoices. They honor him and the country prospers under his leadership. Compassion, it is a gift. We all have it. We are called, by God, to offer it to one another, to our family, friends, neighbors and strangers. In her latest book, *The Great Transformation*, Karen Armstrong says that compassion can save the world. I believe it. I believe God has given us this gift, another way we are made in God's image, to use it to heal the world in any way we can.

November is just one time in all the time of our lives when we think about Thanksgiving. But in reality we are called to live lives of thanksgiving. We are called to be thankful every day for all those wonders God provides in our lives and for the love embedded in us to share with the world around us.

Happy Thanksgiving to you all, my friends.

Meet the Vestry

Dori Sutton

This month St. Paul's must bid farewell to one of its most active long-time members, Dori Sutton. Dori has been a part of the St. Paul's family for over thirty years. She has served on the vestry (once as senior warden), as a lay Eucharistic minister, on the altar guild, in the women's group, on the worship committee, as a lector, and in the choir (she used to be a soprano, until "my voice conked out on me," she says). She also coordinated St. Paul's booth at Bedford Day for many years, as well as managing the snack bar at the Advent Fair, making what former rector Elsa Walberg called her "powerful chili." Dori's faithfulness as St. Paul's longest-serving clerk of the vestry will be hard to top: Dori estimates she has served on the vestry for over twenty years, and during most of that time she served as clerk.

Dori was born in St. Louis, Missouri, but grew up in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Her mother and sister still live in Kalamazoo, and she has four children living up and down the East Coast. Dori came to St. Paul's from the Chicago area in 1974, as the last in a series of moves for her then-husband's job (twelve moves in ten years!). She was raised Roman Catholic, but switched her affiliation to the Episcopal Church when she married.

Dori spent many years doing office work, but later received training as a certified nursing assistant. She has worked as a CNA for about fifteen years, primarily with elderly patients, doing daily and companion care.

In her spare time, Dori plays a lot of tennis, usually at the Woburn Racquet Club. She also loves to paint, working primarily in pastels and watercolors. She wishes she had more time for both hobbies, and is especially looking forward to setting up her easel on the large deck at her new home.

Dori is now entering a period of transition, both joyful and bittersweet. She and her long-time love, Lyle Crawford, will be married at St. Paul's on November 4th, and later that month the two will be moving to upstate New York to begin a new chapter in their lives. Dori is looking forward to the wedding, especially since all of her grandchildren will be involved, and is also excited to be closer to her mother and sister in Kalamazoo (only an eight-hour drive from her new home). But she knows it will be hard to leave all the friends and fellowship she has cultivated over the past thirty years in Bedford and at St. Paul's.

Losing such a wonderful friend of the church will be hard: we will miss Dori and the many ministries she has brought to St. Paul's. We wish her and Lyle all the best as they begin a new phase in their lives together. Godspeed!

Emily Mitchell

St. Paul's is greatly blessed to have Emily Mitchell as a member of its congregation. She is not only full of vim, vigor, and enthusiasm but she sings like an angel. However, I am getting ahead of myself!

Emily grew up in Illinois with her parents and an older sister where she attended the Lutheran Church. Following her graduation from high school she went off to Harvard where she not only received her undergraduate degree but also met her husband to be. Emily must have known that John was "the one," because she picked him up at a party one night and the rest is history.

From Harvard, Emily went on to Syracuse University where she obtained her Master's degree in Education in 1998. John and Emily were married in 1999 and moved into their first home in New Jersey where John was working. Some time later, John signed on with a company that moved them to Bedford and, although John ended up not working for that company, the company not only paid for their move but also helped them buy a house!

Attendance at church being an important part of Emily and John's life they began to shop for a church home. They tried the Lutheran Church in Bedford and found that is was not a match for them. In May of 2001 they came to visit St. Paul's where they have become a very important part of the church family. Their daughter, Eleanor was born on Easter Monday, 2004. John and Emily are expecting their second child very soon.

Emily is a vital member of the choir, Vestry, Stewardship Committee and Capital Campaign Committee. She worked tirelessly on the 50th anniversary celebration. Emily and John also work with the High School Youth Group. In her " spare time," when not tutoring high school students in varied subjects, or working at the Bedford Library, or cataloging books at St. Paul's library, or working at her job editing children's books, she loves to read. She is also president of the alumni foundation for her college choir at Harvard.

St. Paul's is indeed blessed to have Emily in its midst.

Catechesis Corner

The children ages 3–6 are off to a wonderful start! They have been introduced to their space (their atrium) and are getting accustomed to it and the weekly rituals and lessons.

The first few weeks both Catechesis I and II either became acquainted or reacquainted with the altar, the prayer table, the Good Shepherd and the liturgical colors. Aiding in all these presentations are wonderful hand made items that these children then use on a regular basis. A few examples of these: a felt board with all the various altar items, wooden, hand painted Good Shepherd and sheep, matching games, and paper dolls of Father Frank that the children dress (this is definitely a favorite!).

In the next session both classes will hear parables, discover the geography of the land of Israel at the time of Jesus through the globe, relief maps and puzzles, prepare for advent, wreaths andrehearse for their Pageant.

A few special notes:

- + Special thanks to Ginny Draper who gave the children their altar tour
- + November 5th after the Children's Sermon all children are welcome in the Parish Hall for crafts
- + Sunday, December 10th will be a pageant rehearsal for all participants during the church service
- + Saturday, **December 16th** will be a pageant rehearsal for all participants
- + Sunday, December 17th is the Pageant - all should arrive at 9AM

With blessings from the corner, Ellen Ryan and Amanda Hubbard

Middle School Youth Group update

Helen Kissel, Elle Thompson, Ariana and Jake Seymourian, joined by Suzanne Johnson, Lisa Hafer, Sima Seymourian, Jan Gurley and Carrie, Charles and Avery Mathews walked all 10 kilometers at the Crop Walk on October 15th. The weather was beautiful and the community spirit was strong. With a great deal of help from sponsors at St. Paul's and many of our friends and family, we raised a total of **\$1,267**, far exceeding our original goal of \$ 600. The money will go to local community pantries and national. global relief and community development efforts.

This month, we plan to get some more exercise—but this time inside a rock wall climbing gym. We are also joining forces with the high school for a cookie—baking extravaganza at the end of the month. Cookies will be used in holiday care packages sent to far away parish members and given to those parishioners whom we visit during the annual Christmas caroling event.

Carrie Mathews & Suzanne Johnson

High School Youth

The High School and Middle School youth groups will hold their annual cookie baking night on Sunday, November 26th (the Sunday after Thanksgiving) at 5:30pm in the parish hall. We'll be putting together care packages for our friends and family away at college, in the military, or just far from home.

Please plan to attend, more hands mean less work for all of us.

Parents and friends, please send us the name and address of your student, soldier, or far-flung young adult. We'll be glad to send them a care package!

John and Emily Mitchell



News from St. Paul's Weekday Nursery School

The month of September ended with the day long visit from our MA state group day care licenser, Ms. Karen Gale. She found most everything all in order and we happily report that the preschool is licensed again for two more years.

The typically delicious variety of dishes at a pot luck supper (Oct. 3rd) was enjoyed by about 50 people. The evening was made even more pleasant by the improved acoustics in the Big Room to make conversation across the table possible!

Thursday, November 2nd is time for us to hold our annual Open House. It will be a bit shorter this year, from 1:00 to 2:30 P.M. No appointments are necessary and we are doing some advertising. Any additional help you can provide by spreading the word is greatly appreciated. The purpose of the afternoon is to give prospective families with young children the opportunity to see the classrooms/school area and to meet the staff. Activities for the children are planned in each room and parents can receive written information as well. We would hope to begin registrations for next year, but to fill spaces still available for the current year is a goal as well.

Stewardship Update

As we approach November and the Annual Stewardship program, it's important to remember how important it is to pledge your support to St. Paul's Church and its outreach programs. During the past month, we've all been touched by the letters from Barbara Perry and Carol Hollingshead as they describe what St Paul's means to them and why they support the Church financially. Additionally, the wonderful sermon by Emily Mitchell adds to these messages.

During the coming weeks we will hear Witnesses from several members of the parish, enjoy two (2) Cottage meetings where you can learn more about the three (3) aspects of Stewardship (Time, Talent and Treasure) and look forward to Franks' annual sermon on Stewardship.

Please watch your mail in the coming weeks as pledge cards will be arriving on the week of November 13. Please make every effort to complete the pledge card and bring it to Church on Ingathering Sunday November 19.

Thank you for your support,
The Stewardship Committee
Paul Ciaccia, Emily Mitchell, Barbara Perry and Ron Presti

Cookbook Potluck Dinner **Saturday, November 18** **6:00 PM in the Parish Hall**

St. Paul's is publishing a new cookbook this fall that includes recipes from our parishioners and friends and special favorite recipes from our last cookbook. Join us on November 18th at 6 PM for a **family potluck** featuring the recipes included in the cookbook. Bring your family as well as one of the dishes you submitted for the cookbook. If you didn't submit any recipes, come anyway and bring something you will submit for our next cookbook. This will be a fun and relaxing evening with families and friends and it will be a great chance to try out these culinary delights. The cookbooks will be on sale for \$10.00 each. They will make great holiday gifts and will also be sold at the Advent Fair.

Watch for the sign-up sheet and plan to bring a main dish, salad, side dish or dessert to share while you sample the "best of St. Paul's." (If you have forgotten what you submitted for the cookbook, give Emily Mitchell a call.)

See you there and bring a friend! There is no charge for the dinner, but we will accept a free will offering to support the programs of St. Paul's.

This event is sponsored by the Women's Group. If you would like to help, please contact Betsey Anderson or Lynne Wolf. Watch for a planning meeting after church.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Annual Advent Fair

St. Paul's will hold its 2006 Advent Fair on Saturday, December 2nd from 9:00 to 2:00. This is an all Parish event, and it provides a major portion of our annual fundraising revenue. Now that it is **NOVEMBER ...**

WHAT CAN YOU DO??? HOW CAN YOU HELP???

WE NEED YOU ...

- 1) Please consider a **DONATION** to offset costs of supplies for baskets, crafts, the raffle, and snack bar. We really appreciate your help!

- 2) Keep us in mind if you are making jams, jellies, relishes, etc. and donate these food items to the ever-popular **COUNTRY KITCHEN**. And, if you love baking, remember we'll need breads, pies, cookies, and sweet treats to sell for the holidays.

- 3) Dust off your cookbooks and plan to make delicious homemade soup for our **SOUPS-TO-GO** section of the Country Kitchen. Containers are available in the kitchen. Make and freeze!!

- 4) Save good quality **WHITE ELEPHANTS** and any "new and unused" items for our White Elephant Sale. Also, donate any **BOOKS** (in good condition) you may not want or need/read anymore for our book sale.

- 5) **CONTRIBUTE** a good or service to our **SILENT AUCTION**. Use your creativity and/or your connections around town. Sample solicitation letters and donation forms are available in the narthex.

- 6) **VOLUNTEER** to be a Table Coordinator or Helper the day of the fair. The more the merrier!! Sign up sheets will be available in the coming weeks, so stay tuned!

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!

Any questions, **PLEASE** contact **Betsey Anderson** or **Lisa Hafer**.

Fundraising Committee:

As a new addition to the Advent Fair, we will be sponsoring a **Silent Auction!** To make this a success, we need your donations of services, lessons and “auction- able” items. You can find a donation sheet included in this epistle and more in the narthex. Just fill one out describing your donation and drop it in the box in the narthex. You may want to chip in with a friend or two and donate a big ticket item. It is that simple!

Also, we need people to solicit donations from area businesses. Is there a business to which you have a connection? Ask them to donate! If not, there is a list of possible businesses located in the narthex. Check it out, choose a business (or two!) to visit and fill out a donation sheet!

Thanks so much for your help and donations!

We are also selling **Simon Mall Evening of Giving** tickets. The tickets grant you (and your shopping friends) admission to the mall (Burlington, Pheasant Lane, etc.) *After hours*. The stores run sales and discounts that they do not offer at any other time. There are also raffles, door prizes and entertainment. It is fun way to kick off your holiday shopping. The tickets are \$10 (the church receives 7 of the 10). The evening is November 19 from 7 – 10.

A reminder: If you are shopping at Amazon.com, then start your shopping from St. Paul’s website (stpaulsbedford.org) and click to Amazon from there. The church will then receive a portion of your purchase. Thanks!

If you have any questions about any of these events, please call Sharon Healey.

Newcomers Brochure

The vestry has put together a brochure for those new to St. Paul’s, with information about the parish and the Episcopal Church in general. Please pick one up in the narthex for your enjoyment and edification. Our intent is for the brochures to go to those people and families who have been with us for only a year or two, but the information inside can be valuable to all of us. If you have any questions (or if it looks like we’ve run out), please contact a member of the vestry

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
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Bedford, MA 01730

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

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

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The Reverend Daniel Collier

Meghan Finn, Parish Administrator

Joan Reddy, Music Director

Bob Godoy, Sexton

Officers:

Ron Presti, Senior Warden

Emily Mitchell, Junior Warden

Betsey Anderson, Treasurer

Michael Ryan, Assistant Treasurer

Dori Sutton, Clerk

Vestry:

Sharon Keane

Peter Ricci

Paul Kruger

Andy Saladino

Carol Hokana

Robert Thomas

Carrie Mathews

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The General Thanksgiving BCP 101

Almighty God, Father of all mercies,
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks
for all your goodness and loving-kindness
to us and to all whom you have made.
We bless you for our creation, preservation,
and all the blessings of this life;
but above all for your immeasurable love
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.
And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,
that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise,
not only with our lips, but in our lives,
by giving up our selves to your service,
and by walking before you
in holiness and righteousness all our days;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.