

ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE

November 2011

Songs of Thankfulness and Praise...

*Come, let us sing to the LORD; let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.
(Psalm 95:1-2)*

Dear Friends,

Those of you who remember back to the time when the 1928 Prayer Book was in use and morning prayer was the principal service on most Sundays (I was not alive for this!), might find the verses above very familiar. They begin one of the opening canticles for that service, and they are etched into the hearts of many faithful Episcopalians. Unlike most other protestant denominations, which often begin their worship services with prayers of confession, our tradition nearly always begins worship services with songs of thankfulness and praise. Whether it is the canticle above at morning prayer, or one of the many settings of the Gloria at communion services, this is a reminder that our primary stance before God is not guilt, but gratitude; not contrition, but devotion.

I remember when I first woke up to the idea of gratitude as a stance towards life, rather than just saying 'thank you.' It was the summer after my first year in seminary, and I was working at Brigham and Women's Hospital as a chaplain intern. It was my first extended experience with hospitals – fifty to sixty hours a week visiting patients, engaging with doctors and nurses, and doing overnight call. Being so immersed in a place where life begins and ends many times each day, and caring for the people whose loved ones were making those transitions, opened up for me a much broader perspective on my own life. I no longer take my health for granted. I no longer think about my life as having unlimited duration. And I no longer think about gratitude as simply saying thank you.

Most of us say thank you many times each day for one thing or another, but gratitude is far more than a passing comment or a social nicety. Real gratitude is an attitude about life, a posture towards the world that treats every moment and breath as a gift, no matter what joy or sorrow occurs in that moment. I'm not referring to some kind of stoic, unemotional approach towards life, but rather to an approach in which focusing on gratitude as we walk through the hours of our days leads towards a genuine reverence for life, all of life: the good, the bad, and the ugly. This kind of reverence for life animates our souls for connection, for community, for relationship, for love, and for God.

November is the month when our whole country prepares for the annual feast of Thanksgiving, and tries to cultivate this spirit of gratitude and reverence. But of course, we all participate in a Feast of Thanksgiving every Sunday: when we share the bread and the wine, the Eucharist, at the altar. The very word, Eucharist, comes from the Greek word that means Thanksgiving. Each time we kneel or stand at the rail to receive the bread and the wine, we are asking Jesus to come into our souls and renew in our hearts the attitude of gratitude that God hopes will shape our lives for the week to come. It is my privilege and joy to share that feast with all of you.

Chris +



VESTRY CORNER

Dear friends,

We can't believe it's November already! As we enter this season of giving and gratitude, we are continuously grateful for the community of St. Paul's. Your hospitality and friendship over the past few months have made Chris feel very much at home here, and your intentionality and commitment to the parish during this fall's annual pledge drive is a testimony to your generosity of spirit. Thank you.

The Diocese holds its annual convention on Friday and Saturday, November 4 and 5, at the Cathedral of St. Paul in Boston. Chris, Emily, and Paul will be representing St. Paul's at convention. If you have any questions about convention and what goes on there, please feel free to ask any of us.

Elsewhere in this Epistle you'll find lots of information about the Advent Fair, coming up on Saturday, December 3. This is one of the signature events within our parish, for both fellowship and fundraising, and there are so many ways to get involved. Please consider attending a crafts or basket workshop, baking for the Country Kitchen, donating money for supplies or an item for the Silent Auction, posting flyers around town, or most important, just showing up!

The vestry will meet on Tuesday, November 15, at 7:30pm. Anyone is welcome to attend.

Happy Thanksgiving to you all,

Emily and Paul

MEET-THE-RECTOR GATHERINGS

The last two "Meet the Rector" gatherings will be held this month. If you haven't had a chance to attend one, please sign up on the church bulletin board to share light hors d'oeuvres and conversation with Chris for an hour or two. The remaining dates are:

Wednesday, 11/9, 7:00pm at Paul & Wendy Ciaccia's home

Sunday, 11/13, 3:00pm at Sharon & Jack Healey's home

Stewardship

The annual Stewardship/pledging campaign is in full swing. During the past few weeks many of you have heard witness presentations by Arthur Fergusson, Matt Skavenski, and Caroline Larson, lay sermon by Karin Baker, read the lay letter by Joanna Nickerson, and read Chris's rector letter on Stewardship. Many thanks to these individuals for taking the time to explain why they support St. Paul's.

Recently, everyone should have received the annual pledge card and hopefully you have either already turned it in or are contemplating what your gift to St. Paul's will be for 2012.

As you ponder what part of your treasure you can give to St. Paul's, take a look around the church and what has been happening over the past few years with your past pledges. We have a well maintained building and grounds, we have adult education, a very active and growing children's education, youth programs and a solid sense of giving to others in need. Can you, will you, continue to support these endeavors. Your pledge is important to the mission and ministry of St Paul's.

Thank you for your support.

Paul Ciaccia, Stewardship Chairman

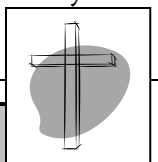
Reminder

If you would like to be added to the **Weekly E-Meditation List**, please e-mail me at chris@stpaulsbedford.org

This list is open to anyone who wants to be on it: members of the parish, relatives, friends, neighbors, etc.

-- Rev. Chris Wendell

Weekday Morning Prayer at St. Paul's Church
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
8:40 a.m.



Pastoral Emergencies

In a pastoral emergency (urgent hospitalization, death, or immediate crisis) if there is no answer at the office, please try and reach Chris at his home number.

High School Youth

The high school youth group is planning to continue its relationship with Emmaus House, a shelter for women and families in Haverhill. Last year we visited twice, sharing crafts and stories with the children in residence, and we plan to return twice this year as well. Please watch your email for details from Arthur about possible dates this month.

Have cookies, will mail! The high school and middle school youth groups will once again hold a Cookie Baking and Care Package Making Extravaganza on Sunday, November 27, at 5:30pm at church. We'll be frosting and decorating cookies, putting together cookie plates to deliver during the Caroling and Progressive Supper in December, and assembling care packages for our friends and family in college, the military, or just far from home. Youth and parents: please watch your email for details on how many sugar cookies we'll need in advance. And everyone: we need addresses! If you have a special person away at school, serving far away, or otherwise deserving of a little pre-Christmas pick-me-up, please send his or her name and address to Emily by Sunday, November 20. Many thanks for your help in this ministry!

-Emily and Arthur

Notes from the Nursery School

October has been a busy month at nursery school. The children seem quite happy and settled into the routine. The month started with a visit from the fire department. The children showed the firemen how well they do with a fire drill; the firemen talked to the children about fire safety and showed them the truck, allowing them to hold their heavy fire jackets and helmets. Our lunch program and the afternoon enrichment program started this month and both have been well attended. We will go on our first field trip to Drumlin Farm next week with the older group. Although the farm will be fun with a hayride included, I expect the highlight for most children will be the ride on a school bus!

Our November themes will be color as we explore mixing primary colors. Also, we will spend some time talking about food, and the Thanksgiving holiday. We will enjoy a "Thanksgiving Tea". It is a day when we dress up and enjoy a special snack together. We will have an Open House for next year's prospective students on November 3 from 1 to 3 PM. If you know anyone who has nursery school age children, please tell them about the open house.

We will have an ice cream social on the evening of November 8 for families enrolled in this year's program.

Lee Frank

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP UPDATE

We had many compliments on our decorated cupcakes which we gave to the Community Table this month for dessert. Thanks so much to Ayoko, Hunter, Felicia, and Allen for decorating! The fun continued as the extra cupcakes were sent to the Habitat for Humanity work site. It is great you are spreading so much cheer in the world.

We had a great trip to the Davis Farm Corn Maze in Sterling, MA. The day was a little chilly and the maze was challenging but we are already planning for next year! What a great way to spend a beautiful fall afternoon. Thanks to all those who came.

Looking forward, we are getting ready for our Operation Christmas Child project. Announcements and a display table a coffee hour began on October 30th. We have students signed up to announce each week what the needs are for our individual shoeboxes, to be sent around the world at Christmas time. Our final collection day will be Sunday November 20th.

Finally, we are still planning for a church sleepover on Friday November 18th. Please RSVP to Karin Baker by November 6th, if you can attend.

Our schedule for the next month is as follows:

Sunday Nov. 6th - Meeting during church, Operation Christmas Child announcements during the service, help at coffee hour with boxes.

Sunday Nov. 13 - Announcements during service, collection of boxes after church.

Sunday Nov. 20 - Collect Operation Christmas Child boxes after church.

Sunday Nov. 27 - Evening - Make Care Packages for college students with the High School youth group.

Karin Baker and Matt Skavenski

CATECHESIS CORNER



Did you notice in Joanna Nickerson's letter to the congregation the part where she said that teaching 3-4 year olds was the best church ministry she ever had? We didn't ask her to say that, but often feel the same way ourselves! Could there be anything more rewarding than watching three year olds recently in the nursery, becoming familiar with so many special objects in the Atrium, and by extension the St. Paul's sanctuary? Or Kindergarteners going to a deeper level with the parables, and starting to be able to read the words on the prayer cards? Since September we have learned about the altar and prayer table, the colors and calendar of the church year, the vestments of a priest and, very importantly, some stories of the Good Shepherd and His love and care for the sheep.

We have had eight 3-4 year old children attending Catechesis I, led this session and next by Carol Hokana and Amanda Hubbard. Catechesis II has six 5-year olds, and is led by Ellen Ryan, Ron Presti, Lori Murphy and Nancy Kupfrian. A number of assistants keep the classes running smoothly and safely.

In November, as we approach Advent, we will start to look at maps of the Holy Land. Not to create geography experts, but to situate the upcoming Nativity stories and pageant in a real time and place. Wooden puzzles and relief maps are good hands-on fun, too. We will begin with some of the pre-nativity narratives such as the Annunciation and, in Catechesis II, the visitation of Mary to Elizabeth. Our shelves are already beginning to fill with activities to choose from, and the children are so good at selecting, taking turns and putting things back for the next child to work with.

Thanks to those who attended our first meeting in October. Rev. Chris has kindly offered to start sending some reflections on upcoming lessons to Catechists, assistants, and parents – look forward to some emails soon so we can all learn along with the children. Session II starts in late November. We could use more adults and youth to help out, so no one needs to be scheduled too often. If you would like to consider participating in the 'best ministry ever,' please contact any of us.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

November 6 – Family Sunday

December 4 – Family Sunday and 1st pageant rehearsal in Parish Hall

Save the Date!

The Women's Group at St. Paul's is offering following *tentative* dates for fellowship and fun. Please save the date for one or all of these events. Also, we are in need of someone willing to host the potluck breakfast in March of 2012. If you are interested in hosting this event, organizing or leading any of the other events, or have any questions, please contact Mary Curlew.

November 7, 2011

December 6, 2011

January 7, 2012

February 27, 2012

March 18, 2012

April TBA

May TBA

Book Group: Charlie St. Cloud

Bible Study of Mary and Elizabeth with Rev. Chris Wendell

Potluck Breakfast

Book Discussion or Guest Discussion

Annual Brunch

Trip to Tower Hill to see the daffodils

Community Theater Outing



Christmas Pageant 2011

Is it that time already? Yes, it is time to give it some thought and get the dates on the calendars!

Sunday, December 18th – 10AM – Christmas Pageant

Saturday, December 17th 9AM - Lead characters

Saturday, December 17th - 10AM – Full cast

Sunday, December 11th – 10AM – during Sunday School

Sunday, December 4th – 10AM – rehearsal after
Children's Sermon (Family Sunday)

If you know now your child/children might have a conflict with the pageant and/or these particular rehearsals, please let me know and I can cast them accordingly.

Every child is welcome to participate and urged to do so!!!

Please see me, call me, or email me:

Carol Wait

Or

Andrea Hayes

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

SILENT AUCTION

Please contribute to the Silent Auction by donating an item or service, such as gift certificates, specialty baked goods, tickets to sporting events, special antiques or gift items, a weekend at a cottage, tutoring, art or music lessons, babysitting -- use your creativity and / or your connections around town. The deadline to commit to donate is Sunday, November 27, 2011. Forms are available in the Narthex. Any commitments made after November 27th may not be considered for this year's Silent Auction due to coordinating, cataloguing, and organizing donations. If you have any questions, contact Louisa Saladino-Kuhl.

Karaoke Night is a fundraising event to be held in January 21st, 2012. If you are interested in helping in some way, please contact Emily Mitchell, who will be spearheading this event. St. Paul's will host another fundraising event in the Spring. The Fundraising Committee is currently looking for fundraising ideas and volunteers to run and help with the event. Support will be provided to everyone interested in leading and helping out with the event. For more information, please contact Sue Marasa or Louisa Saladino-Kuhl.

Another chance for Torchbearers, Gospelers and Crucifers to be re-trained! Sunday November 20 after coffee hour

If you missed the October training, here is your chance to get updated on the changes in roles and responsibilities.

New servers will also be trained on November 20.

Please contact Caroline Larson to confirm your attendance.



Donated Tools

We would like to collect some garden tools for use at the church. If you have any shovels, rakes, hoes, etc and would like to see them put to good use, please consider donating them to the church. If you'd prefer to donate a new item that would be great as well.

All tools would be used at the church for yard maintenance. Contact Paul Ciaccia or Rene Seaton.

Gift Baskets Meetings



Basket meetings are being held after church on Sunday & Thursday mornings @ 9:30 a.m. in the loft.

We invite any and all to join us! Rather than items needed at this point we could use the extra help or donations to defray costs. Thanks for your support!

*Jan Svendsen &
Lisa Hafer*

Craft Workshops 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday November 1st
(Nickerson)

Sunday November 6th
Children's workshop at church after service

Tuesday November 8th
(Wolf)

Monday November 14th
(Wolf)

Monday November 21st
place TBD

Week of November 29th,
Boxwood workshop at the church,
Date to be determined

Men's Breakfast



The Men's Breakfasts will begin again on Saturday Nov 12 at 7:30 am. We will meet the second Saturday of each month to cook and eat a hearty breakfast and enjoy each others company.



Fall Clean Up November 12

Come join us on Nov 12 at 9 am for the Fall clean up of the church and church grounds. We have a number of things to do so all are welcome to help.

The following is a partial list of things to be done:

Rake Leaves, mow lawn, prepare gardens for winter, put out deer fencing, sand, prime and paint the recently repaired woodpecker holes, clean all windows, dust and clean all rooms, finish basement clean up, clean and reorder the storage above the kitchen, etc.

Many hands will make light work so if you can volunteer some of your morning on November 12, it would be greatly appreciated. A sign up sheet is on the bulleting board.

Many Thanks,
Paul Ciaccia

SUPPORT ST. PAUL'S THROUGH AMAZON!

Starting your Christmas shopping? If you're shopping at Amazon.com, don't forget to visit St. Paul's website first: www.stpaulsbedford.org. Click on the Amazon link on the homepage, and every dollar you spend earns money for St. Paul's. Every purchase counts!

Community Table Dates

February 9th
April 12th

Slow Down, Quiet, It's Advent! Save the Date for a Parish Advent Quiet Day



Save the date for a Quiet Day on Saturday afternoon, December 10th from 3:30pm to 7:00pm. Parishioner and retreat leader Mary Curlew and Rev. Chris Wendell will co-lead an Advent-themed reflective afternoon of prayer, meditation, relaxation and peacefulness here at the church (no business allowed!). Come find a moment of stillness amidst the busy Advent season, as we prepare ourselves to welcome Christ into our lives anew. Mark your calendars now and watch for more information in the weeks to come. All are welcome, most appropriate for high school students and older. A small donation (\$5) is requested to help us provide a simple supper for you. RSVP to Chris at chris@stpaulsbedford.org or 781-275-8262.

OUTREACH AT ST. PAUL'S NOVEMBER MISSION OF THE MONTH:



An outreach program the whole family can participate in.

Put a smile on the face of a needy child with a shoebox packed with school supplies, toys and personal care items. St. Paul's Middle School Youth group is collecting filled shoeboxes and specific supplies for this project. Boxes go to orphanages and needy children around the world.

The mission of Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan's Purse, is to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to needy children around the world, and together with the local church worldwide, to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

We would like everyone in the parish to participate if possible. There are many ways to take part and help with the program.

1. **Make your own box:** You may take the flyer at coffee hour, which describes the types of items to put in the box, and wrap and make your own box at home. The middle school youth will collect the finished boxes on November 20th after church.
2. **Bring in items to donate:** Sign up at coffee hour to bring in specific supplies that we need. Each box needs toiletries, school supplies, and toys as specified by the flyer.
3. **Donate money for shipping:** Each shoebox costs \$7 to send, and they are sent to many different areas of the world. Please make your check payable to St. Paul's and note "Operation Christmas Child" in the memo.
4. **Say a prayer and make a note:** You may write a note for your box to say Merry Christmas or to introduce yourself to the child receiving the box. Pictures and Christmas cards are also welcome.



REMEMBER! DEADLINE for packages is November 20, 2011.

Come and visit our table at coffee hour and see a sample box and pick up a flyer. We are hoping to find out where our boxes go, by signing up online at www.samaritanspurse.org. Please contact Karin Baker or Matt Skavenski for more information.

UPDATE ON OUR OCTOBER MISSION: HABITAT



The Outreach Committee's October focus was Habitat for Humanity, corresponding with Habitat's observance of the United Nations' "World Habitat Day" on October 3rd. In addition to prayers offered during the Eucharist on Sunday, October 2nd, members of the congregation participated in a Build Day at the Bedford site on Saturday, October 15th. The work crew constructed stairs on the front porch, laid tile, and installed trim.

Members of the community are invited to celebrate the dedication of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Lowell's fifth home constructed at Carter Way (off North Road) in Bedford on Saturday, November 5th, at 2:00pm.

GINGERBREAD HOUSE BUILDERS WANTED! Join the 6th Annual Gingerbread Village Display to Support Habitat for Humanity of Greater Lowell by building a Gingerbread House! The dates this year are Dec. 3rd and 4th. Houses are raffled at the end of the display. There is no registration fee and all skills levels are encouraged to participate. Our theme this year is "Winter Wonderland" and the Builder's Challenge is to build a replica of a Habitat House from anywhere in the world where Habitat Builds.



To register, and to get more information about the event and the Builder's Challenge, visit us at www.allsaintschelmsford.org and follow the links to Gingerbread 2011.

ST. PAUL'S ADVENT FAIR



St. Paul's will hold its 2011 Advent Fair on Saturday, December 3rd from 9:00 to 2:00. This is an all Parish event that provides a major portion of our annual fundraising revenue and a wonderful opportunity for fellowship.

ONLY ONE MONTH TO GO ... WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Attend a **BASKET WORKSHOP** in the loft on Sunday after church or Thursday mornings. No experience or big time commitment necessary!!

Spend some time with the **CRAFTS GROUP** and go to one of their workshops. Or work on a craft project at home to donate for the fair.

Please consider a **DONATION** to offset costs of supplies for baskets, crafts, and the snack bar. We really appreciate your help! Watch for a basket for donations at coffee hours.

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. Consider making gingerbread or gingersnaps. If you bake a cake, please make it a single layer for ease of transport

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!!

Save good quality new or gently used items you don't need for our **WHITE ELEPHANT** sale. Also, donate any **BOOKS, DVDs**, etc. (in good condition) you may not need/read anymore for our book sale. All of these are a great way to recycle and help St. Paul's at the same time.

CONTRIBUTE an item or service to our **SILENT AUCTION**. See Louisa Saladino-Kuhl if you have any questions. Forms are due by the 27th of November.

VOLUNTEER to set up, to help the day of the fair or to clean up. The more the merrier!! Sign up sheets will be available in the coming weeks, so stay tuned!

Buy and sell tickets for the **iPad 2 RAFFLE** - \$10 each or 3 for \$25.

Any questions, please contact **Betsey Anderson**.

Kids Challenge

All children of the parish are invited to complete these puzzles. If you return them to the church office completed as best you can so we can display them, you may then collect a small prize from Rev. Chris!



Jesus said, "What I say
to you, I say to everyone."
What did He say to them?

Follow the directions to find the answer.

DISCIPLES

Switch the "C" and the "E."

Change the "E" to an
"A" and the "P" to a "W."

Change the second "T" to a "T."

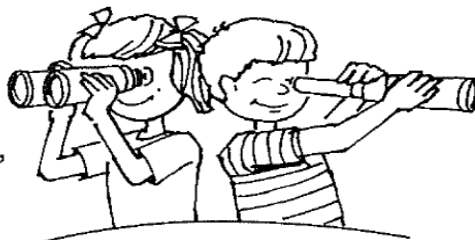
Change the "D" to an "H."

Switch the "H" and the
last "S." Delete the "I."

Move the "W" to the first
position. Delete the "L."

Delete both of the "S"s.

Jesus said,
" _____ !"



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

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 Christopher S. Wendell, Rector
Tracy Lane, Parish Administrator
Joan Reddy, Music Director
Bob Godoy, Sexton

Officers:

Emily Mitchell, Co-Warden
Paul Ciaccia, Co-Warden
David Woodward, Treasurer
Katie West, Clerk

Vestry:

Betsey Anderson
Cassie Baker
Arthur Fergusson
Lisa Hafer
Sharon Healey
Carol Hokana
Rene Seaton

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Thanksgiving; A Prayer by Lancelot Andrewes (1555-1626)

O my Lord, my Lord, I thank Thee

For that I am, that I am alive, that I am rational:
For nurture, Preservation, governance:
For education, citizenship, religion:
For Thy gifts of grace, Nature, estate:

For redemption, Regeneration, instruction:
for calling, recalling, further calling manifold:
for forbearance, Longsuffering, long longsuffering
towards me, many times, many years, until now:

For all good offices I have received, Good speed I have gotten:
For any good thing done:
For the use of things present, they promise and my hope
touching the fruition of the good things to come:

For my parents honest and good,
Teachers gentle, benefactors always to be had in remembrance,
colleagues likeminded,
hearers attentive, friends sincere, retainers faithful

For all who have stood me in good stead
By their writings, their sermons, conversations,
prayers, examples, rebukes, wrongs:
For these things and all other,
Which I wot of, which I wot not of,
open and secret, things I remember,
things I have forgotten withal,
things done to me after my will
or yet against my will,

I confess to Thee and bless Thee
and give thanks unto Thee,
And I will confess and bless
and give thanks to Thee all the days of my life.

What thanks can I render to God again
For all the benefits that He hath done unto me?