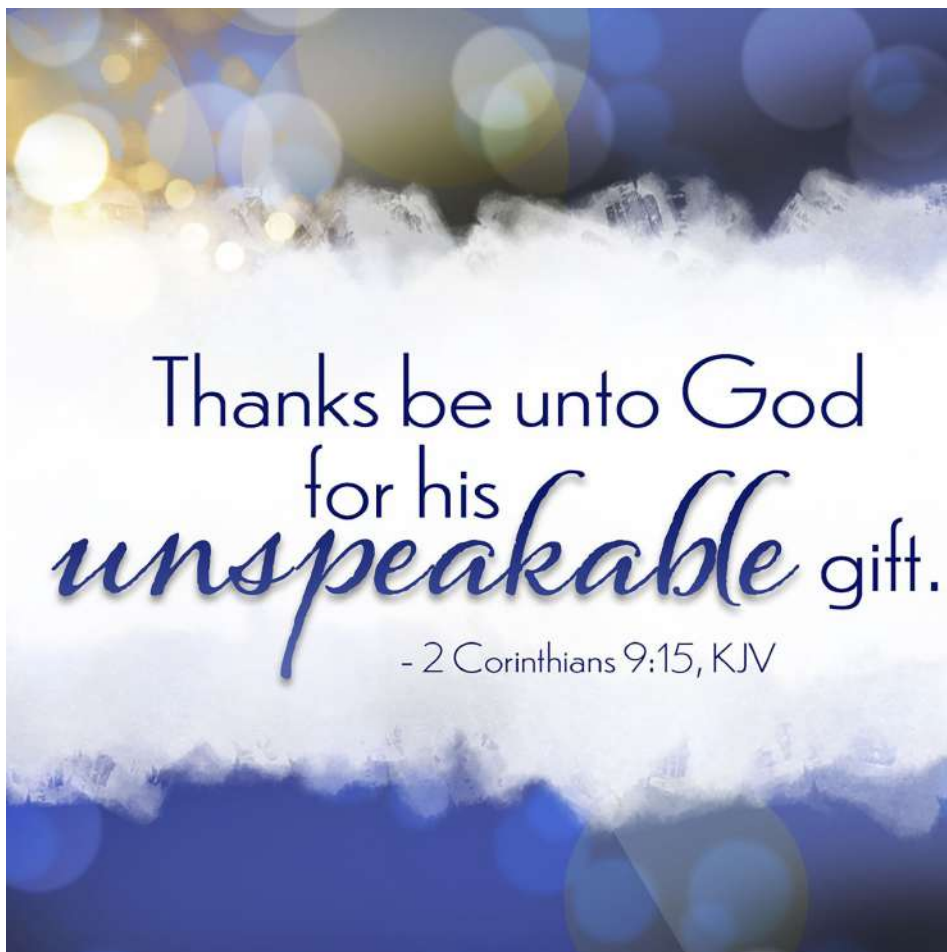


December
2021
Volume
LXXVIII

THE EPISTLE

St. Paul's
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Rector's Corner



2

"This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' " Matt. 3:3

Friends,

In this holy season of Advent we are given a gift of focus and quiet. You might be asking how you could possibly find the time for focus and quiet when there's so much to DO! I get it, I really do. The gift of Advent is opened by making time for God or we could ignore it and miss out on all this holy time will bring us. So much of our lives seem to be on a treadmill of work, shopping, kids' activities, travel and parties. We won't really be able to be present with our family, friends and even ourselves if we don't take time to prepare our hearts and contemplate what Jesus' incarnation means for us.

As we look to the end of the year, we remember what was with gratitude and hope for what will be. We have high hopes for what the New Year will bring to the world as well as St. Paul's Church. We are in a time of transition with leaders retiring, vestry members ending their terms and ministries being revived and refreshed around us. Kyle King has served as the Buildings and Grounds manager for several years and is ready to retire as of the end of this year.

I suggest we have three positions that work together on the B&G Team that each have a distinct focus. The **first** could be manager of the systems in our physical plant to include heating and cooling, wiring & electric and plumbing and communication with Safety Systems and Aladdin. The **second** could be the repair and maintenance manager who would work with Jeremiah & Terry to maintain appliances, lights and help establish a schedule for cleaning. Finally, the **last** could be the grounds manager who schedules and plans yardwork, sidewalk & parking lot maintenance and has the master plan for how our grounds should look. My hope is that you will consider stepping into one of these leadership roles and work with the B&G team to make our physical plant thrive.

We need more teachers to work with our children and youth in Christian Education. We have such great kids and could use more people who want to help support them and their families. Please consider becoming a part of that support system and getting to know our fantastic kids and families!

As we prepare for Christmas let us remember that the greatest need any of us have is being loved for the precious child of God we are. The material and financial needs of our community are real and underlying them all are the love and belonging we crave. The best gift you can give is your presence and I hope your Advent and Christmas are full of the loving presence of family and friends.

Faithfully, Sarah+

Curate's Report



*"Let the wise also hear and gain in learning,
and the discerning acquire skill." Proverbs 1:5*

Siblings in Christ,

One of the best things about working at St. Paul's is the community aspect of what we do. Rarely do we do things alone. The young families had a second annual trip to Meckley's on Halloween this year. A fun time was had by all. And we did it together. A group of us followed the youngest child with us through the corn maze. And we made it out in time for church the next Sunday! She did a great job and had some help from some of the bigger kids. Outings like Meckley's are not just about having fun, but also learning and exploring and fellowship. And in this case, it was about allowing the youngest to learn by exploring and leading the way for the rest of us. This was a reminder that experiencing the world through the lens of a child can be a good change of pace for those of us adulting daily.

What's also neat to see is our kids fearlessly taking up new ministries and enhancing new skills in old ministries. When we celebrated the Feast of All Saints our oldest youth pulled out all the stops, refreshing formerly known skills as thurifer and boat bearer, and one taking up acolyting for the first time. Do you every wonder just why we use incense during worship? Ask one of our kids and they will tell you what we've talked about in Sunday school. Many of our middle age group of kids and even a couple of the younger ones have taken up helping with technology and a large part of the technology team running the services is our children. It's about learning for the kids, and it is becoming clear that in today's world our kids are an important, integral, and indispensable part of our St. Paul's community. For the adults helping, it's about using our wisdom not just to live well ourselves, but to teach others that same wisdom.

St. Paul's children and youth also collaborated with the kids from First Presbyterian and First United Methodist for a movie night. When Sparry Sparks' funeral overlapped with the planned movie night in Holy Spirit Hall First United Methodist graciously and immediately offered to host the event at their church. It is the beginning of a new and exciting partnership.

Now is an important time in our church. It is imperative we actively work to empower those coming behind us and impart the knowledge we have. Our traditions are much too rich to lose. It is my prayer that each of us thinks about how we can continue our traditions, including care of all our members and our church building and extending into the greater Jackson community. As incense raises up to God, I raise this prayer for our church community.

Avent blessings.

In faith,

Melissa





From Our Sr. Warden...

It has been wonderful to see so many familiar faces back in church and to enjoy meeting new people. The pandemic made us all stop and think about our lives and the way we live them. We had to stop so many activities during the peak of COVID and are now finally able to return, cautiously, to many of the things we enjoy in life. Being isolated helped us reflect on our relationships with others. Not only our family, but the people around us. We all enjoy seeing each other in church and realize how much we missed the interaction. Whether you are in church or online, it is comforting to know you are near.

We had a wonderful funeral service for Sparry Sparks and so many people came to honor and celebrate his life. The Church was fuller than I have ever seen it and it was wonderful to know we could honor Sparry with this beautiful send off.

The Harvest dinner on November 14th was well attended and it was wonderful to enjoy a delicious meal with so many good friends. Thank you to everyone who came and enjoyed the breaking of the bread. Jeremiah did an excellent job with the turkey and fixings and the side dishes and desserts (especially the yummy desserts) provided by parishioners made the meal complete. Ahhhh. It was nice to enjoy this meal after having to cancel the last few years.

Pledge cards were blessed during the service, but there is still plenty of time to get your pledge cards turned into the church. We use the pledge amounts to help the vestry determine a budget for the church for next year, so the sooner you get your pledge cards in, the more accurately we can plan a budget for 2022. Thank you in advance.

Yours in faith,
Debbie



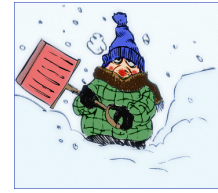
Please join us at 10:30 am on Sunday, January 2nd for our annual Epiphany Pageant.

*No Adult Forum or Church School that Sunday also as we prepare for the pageant.

Rehearsal will at be 9 am on January 1st.

Please plan to stay after the service and help us remove the greenery from the church. We would love for you to help!

Building & Grounds



Tidying things up before winter. Removal of leaves was the last outdoor project, completed November 27th, just before the snow fall. It is hard to predict with nature dropping leaves and the city schedule for pick up. The Lord was with us!! However the next day Sunday, Terry Treadwell and I traded our leaf blowers in for snow blowers. Our new snowplow person was there doing the heavy lifting, while Terry and I cleaned up the rest.

I am happy to report Aladdin started our HVAC renovation today November 29th should be completed by December 1st or 2nd.

Looking forward into next year a few projects come to mind. The flat roof over the offices and educational building. Replacing the door frame and door outside by the back steps. Continue to replace old doorknobs with emergency crash bars to facilitate quick emergency exit from the Sanctuary.

Kyle King
Chairperson, Buildings and Grounds
St. Paul's, Jackson



Lord you wait for us
to come and see you.
You wait to shine light
where there is darkness,
To show love
where there is hate,
To share peace
where there is conflict.
Lord you wait for us
to come and see you.
You wait for us
to remember
what has been fulfilled,
to prepare
for what must still be done.
You wait in hope and expectation,
Longing for us
To shine your light,
To show your love,
To share your peace.

Christine Sine godspacelight.com



The Women of St. Paul's Episcopal Church

ECW

Here we are again friends and I wish you all a happy Advent season. There are many feasts and celebrations in December. Our Jewish brothers and sisters start their Hanukkah season on November 28, the same day we start the season of Advent. Kwanzaa, celebrated by our African American brothers and sisters, starts December 26. Ironically the feast of the Immaculate Conception is on December 8. This was always a very special day in our family growing up. It was considered a holy day of obligation for Catholics and children had the day off from school. It was traditionally the day when we went to see Santa and to buy our Christmas finery. We loved that day and the tradition that came with it. December 26 is boxing day and is so named because that was the day the alms collection boxes found in churches were opened.

So far, the nut sale has resulted in a small profit with the expectation that will increase as more nuts are sold. So, if you didn't get your order in on time and you find PLENTY of people to buy nuts for, there are still lots of opportunities ahead to purchase. Nuts will be sold at coffee hour and likely at the ECW Holiday luncheon on December 11. We will give a final profit figure when the nut sale is concluded, and all monies are collected.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! The response to our request for donations for the Priceless Gifts has been tremendous! A delivery has been made already and the workers were stunned by the number of items given. Don't forget the drive goes till December 12 so you still have time to donate needed items such as hats, gloves, scarfs, socks, wipes, batteries, toys etc. It is such a huge blessing to the families this organization serves.

ECW is sponsoring a St. Nicholas' day celebration for the children on December 5. There will be cupcakes and special goody bags to share with all the kiddos. As part of the children's sermon during the service, Rev Sarah will share the story of St. Nicholas from his birth in Patara, Turkey to his bishopric in Myra and his role in the current tradition of gift giving at Christmas. If you have children or grandchildren in the area, please bring them as we celebrate both St. Nicholas and the special place he has in the hearts of all children.

ECW Holiday Luncheon is December 11, at the Country Club of Jackson. Cost is \$20. Please contact Rev. Sarah if help is needed with finances. As usual, a huge thank you to Helen Green for securing this date and location for us. Please sign up in the glass narthex. Unlike other general meetings when you are welcome even if you didn't sign up, this one is very different. You MUST sign up as the Country Club needs exact numbers to have enough meals ready. We must supply numbers three days before the event, so you have plenty of time to get your name down. We strongly encourage ALL women of the church to sign up. Even if you have never been to a meeting before or don't intend to go to a meeting in the future, we would still love to see you on such a special occasion and celebrate the season with you all.

ECW continued...

ECW endeavors to minister to women, children, and other marginalized and vulnerable people in our community. To this end we intend to support the efforts of Together We Can Make a Difference. So, watch out for further details as we support The Baby Pantry in February and Easter for Elders in April. All women are welcome to join the vital and dynamic group that is ECW as we forge a path forward.

As we enter this season of Advent, a season of anticipation and preparation for the birth of our lord and savior Jesus Christ, I am reminded of a teacher I had. She told us to prepare our hearts by doing good things for others during the season. For each good turn we did we made a safer, warmer place for the blessed baby Jesus to be born into. This story resonates with me to this day. I encourage you all to prepare a safe, warm space in your heart by thinking of those less fortunate than yourself and doing one good thing to help them. If we all do just one good thing it soon adds up to many good things and that would be a huge gift for the baby Jesus.

I wish you all HOPE for the future, PEACE, and JOY always, and LOVE from all of us in ECW.

Respectfully submitted,
Valerie Rowley, Vice President, ECW.



A holiday invitation to ALL women of St. Paul's...

You are cordially invited to join us at the Women of St. Paul's ECW annual Christmas luncheon at the Country Club of Jackson on Saturday, December 11, 2021 at 11 am. Please R.S.V.P. **no later than Dec. 7th** on the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the glass narthex, or contact Sandra Kilian or Valerie Rowley for more info. The cost this year is \$20. Those who have concerns about the cost, please contact Rev. Sarah.

We would love to see you there!

A Year of Thanks

-by Curate Melissa



For the calendar year of 2021 I'm emphasizing a year of thanks to some of those ministries which help make St. Paul's be all that it is. Each month this year you will see me highlight one or more of the ministries and thus ministers of our parish community. Stay tuned to see if your ministry is one highlighted!

The ministry I am highlighting this month is musicians. There are many musicians at St. Paul's that contribute to our worship. First is our organist, Julie, who plays for our 10:30am Sunday services as well as for funerals and other special occasions.

Another ministry of music is the handbell choir. The choir is directed by Michelle Gibson and has had many past and current members. Be sure to listen for this group bringing Christmas cheer in the weeks to come!

Our vocalists who help lead the service in absence of the choir are Wayne Frey and Christy Randall. There are also many parishioners who are musicians who do solos on instruments or vocally. Julie has even recruited at least one of her sons to sing a solo and Pastor Sarah has also contributed solos to worship. Parishioner Brandon Whitford performed a guitar and vocal solo for the Transgender Day of Remembrance service and everyone who sings at St. Paul's is part of this wonderful music ministry as well.

We look forward to a time when we can bring back a choir to St. Paul's and give thanks for the gifts of the rich music community here. Please join me in praying this prayer:

O God, whom saints and angels delight to worship in heaven: Be ever present with your servants who seek through art and music to perfect the praises offered by your people on earth; and grant to them even now glimpses of your beauty, and make them worthy at length to behold it unveiled for evermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP 819.)



Handbells are back !

Come join the fun on Thursday evenings, from **6:00-7 pm** in the chapel. All are welcome!

For details or questions, contact Michelle Gibson (832) 445-4461.





Come Join us on Sunday,
December 21st after the
10:30 am service.



OFFICE CLOSED

December 24-27
December 31 &
January 1, 2022



Friday, Dec. 24th, Christmas Eve:

5:00 PM Service

11:00 PM Service

Saturday, Dec. 25th, Christmas Day:

10:00 AM Holy Eucharist

December 26, 2021:

1 service only - NO 8 AM Service

10:30 AM - Holy Eucharist



Sunday, January 2, 2021:

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist

10:30 AM - Epiphany Pageant



Organist's Corner



An Organist's Faith Story

I often think that I come to Scripture in what I call a “backwards” manner. Being a lifelong lover of hymnody, I will find myself intrigued by the text of a hymn, especially new ones, and then set out to find the related passages in Scripture. One of my favorite new hymns (written by fellow graduates of my alma mater, Wittenberg University), has this text:

“Beloved, God’s chosen, put on as a garment, compassion, forgiveness, and goodness of heart. Above all, before all, let love be your raiment that binds into one every dissonant part.”

The poetic words come from Colossians 3:12-16. “Therefore, as the elect of God, Holy and Beloved, clothes yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with each other and forgive any complaint you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which is the bond of perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, for to this you were called as members of one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.”

I do not always find reading or reciting Scripture to be a comfort to me, but to sing it, to have the words flowing through my heart, to have those words be my “theme song” – that is what can provide me with emotional support in times of trial. Over the last few years, I have watched my mother, then my father, and finally my mother-in-law struggle with declining health after falls and broken bones that eventually led to their deaths. I often failed to feel that God could want His Beloved in such tormented health situations. I sometimes had difficulty feeling God’s presence as I sat at my parents’ bedsides, spending weeks and months far from home in an emotionally trying situation.

But, to support, console, and encourage me, I had my hymns of faith - the Word of God set to music by the hymn writers from the earliest times to the present. The Scripture in many hymns gave me comfort and assurance. Christmas hymns gave my mother comfort just days before she died, when my sons and I sang of Jesus’s birth and she tried to mouth some words with us. One of my sons wrote me a poem after I had recovered from cancer the second time. He wrote about the hymn, “Healer of Our Every Ill,” which was my “theme song” during that difficult time of surgeries and treatment. While my son is not sure that our lives will never again be touched by serious illness or other difficulties, he wrote that he has that hymn to support his faith, just in case. (You can read that text in Worship & Rejoice #630.)

We are all the Beloved, God’s Chosen. We can let the love of Christ dwell in our hearts, and feel gratitude, assurance, and comfort as we sing, listen to, and ponder the hymns and other music of the Church.

Julie J. Baglien
St. Paul's Organist





Wayne Frey	December 2
Dr. James Freer	December 7
Elaine Themm	December 10
Margaret O'Connor	December 12
Dr. John Alipit	December 13
Diane Billingsley	December 15
Rev. Sarah Hurlbert	December 20
Jan Osborn	December 25
Jesus	December 25
Harriet Lloyd	December 29



Mike & Diane Worthing	December 3
Jim & Joyce Grace	December 12
Wayne & Romelle Frey	December 16



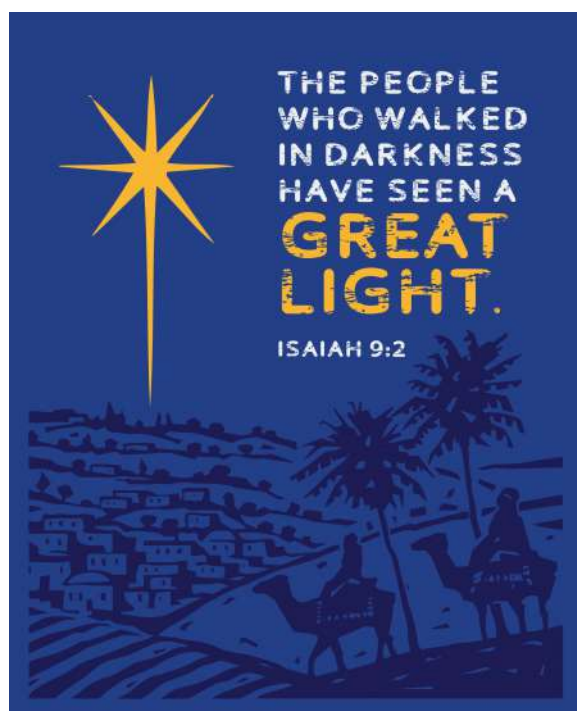
"In Thanksgiving"

This month we are grateful for:

James Grant & Nathan Randall for their "leadership & commitment to our live stream ministry!"

Christy Randall for her "commitment & involvement"

THANK YOU!





Join us for in-person services at 8 am or 10:30 am. Capacity Restrictions are lifted and masks are not required, but are still strongly suggested. Contact tracing remains in place.

Or Join us online Sundays at 10:30 am:

For the Facebook Livestream of our service follow the link:

<https://www.facebook.com/stpauljxmi>

Sunday Worship Bulletins are on our website at <https://stpauljxmi.org/>

You can also view our services later on Facebook.

(You do NOT have to have a Facebook account to view our videos.)

Bible Study



Bible Study is in person on Wednesdays at **10:30 am** in the Small Dining Room.

(It will continue to be on Zoom also for those who would like to still attend online.)

Follow this link to Zoom in: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83005898502>

No Password required



**Wednesdays @ 12:15 pm -
Holy Eucharist in the chapel**



Join Pastor Sarah each **Wednesdays at 8pm** on our St. Paul's

Facebook page for the service of Compline from the Book of Common Prayer with the commemoration of saints that day.

All are welcome to join us for a 'pub theology' evening. We meet at Ironbark Brewery **every other Wednesday at 6pm** (e.g. Dec 1, 15).

Questions? Email Tom at holsingerfriesen@gmail.com.

Adult Forum

9:15 am-10:15 am on Sundays in the small dining room.

Email Eric Magnusson (emagnusson75@gmail.com) for more info or questions.



B O O K S T U D Y

Parish Advent Study

For Advent, Rev. Sarah and Eric Magnusson will lead a parish wide study using "Traces of the Trade: Tales From The Deep North". This documentary shows the history of the slave trade in New England and how one family's legacy and the legacy of the Episcopal Church are intertwined with the slave

trade in America. The study will take place during Adult Forum on the four Sundays of Advent as well as Wednesday evenings (beginning on Dec. 1st) at 5:30pm in the Small Dining Room. All study materials will be provided for you and a simple supper will accompany the Wed. study.

Please plan to come and learn together during this Holy Season.

Cardio Drumming is back!

Join Instructor Michelle Gibson on Tuesday & Thursday evenings at 5:15-6 pm in Holy Spirit Hall beginning November 2nd. It's free and welcome to all fitness levels.



Some of our St. Paul's drumming crew hard at work!





December

The Birth of King Jesus

Day 1 – John 1:1-5
Day 2 – Isaiah 9:6-7
Day 3 – Isaiah 11:1-2
Day 4 – Jeremiah 33:14-16
Day 5 – Luke 1:26-31
Day 6 – Luke 1:31-33
Day 7 – Luke 1:34-38
Day 8 – Matthew 1:18-21
Day 9 – Matthew 1:22-25
Day 10 – Luke 1:39-45
Day 11 – Luke 1:46-56
Day 12 – Micah 5:2-4
Day 13 – Luke 2:1-7
Day 14 – Luke 2:8-12
Day 15 – Luke 2:13-14
Day 16 – Luke 2:15-18
Day 17 – Luke 2:19-20
Day 18 – Matthew 2:1-2
Day 19 – Matthew 2:3-6

Day 20 – Matthew 2:7-10
Day 21 – Matthew 2:11-12
Day 22 – Matthew 2:13-14, 19-23
Day 23 – John 1:14
Day 24 – John 18:36-37
Day 25 – John 3:16
Day 26 – Romans 6:23
Day 27 – Galatians 4:4-5
Day 28 – 1 John 5:11
Day 29 – 1 Timothy 1:15-17
Day 30 – Revelation 3:20-21
Day 31 – Titus 3:3-7

