



A Note from the Rector by The Rev. Carolyn H. Eklund

This Advent season I'm leading a class that is a discussion of Pope Francis' major encyclical, "Care of Our Common Home." The content of the class considers a faith response to the fact of Climate Change, pollution, dependence on non-renewable sources of energy and our "throwaway culture. The three-week course explores biblical, theological and ethical teachings of our obligation to be good stewards of God's Creation that God blessed and declared to be "very good."

When I offered to teach this course, I thought that a study of the care of the earth would be appropriate for Advent. Just as we prepare for God to come among us in the flesh, the meaning of the word Incarnation, study and care of God's creation is also "incarnational." As Pope Francis reminds us in paragraph #235 *"For Christians, all the creatures of the material universe find their true meaning in the incarnate Word, for the Son of God has incorporated in his person part of the material world, planting in it a seed of definitive transformation. 'Christianity does not reject matter. Rather, bodiliness is considered in all its value in the liturgical act, whereby the human body is disclosed in its inner nature as a temple of the Holy Spirit and is united with the Lord Jesus, who himself took a body for the world's salvation.'"*[165]

Any deep discussion about the care of the earth and the disproportionate negative effects pollution has on the poor must include education, connection with the real world and deepening of spirituality of the faithful with the hope of transforming our hearts and move courageously to action.

The season of Advent is intended to prepare Christians for the coming of the incarnate God, Emmanuel, "God with us." God's desire to connect with human flesh and the real world was so intense that he called upon an earthly partner to bring this to pass. Mary said, "yes" to this, providing us with an opportunity to celebrate "God made man and dwelled among us." It's real and it's pure love.

Episcopalians don't shun the world. We fully engage with the world while at the same time, we look for Christ to come again and reign over all the earth.

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

Living Local	3
From the Music Desk	4
Adult Formation: Quiet Morning	5
"Ticket for a Can"	6
Neighborhood Caroling	6
Giving Ministry	7
Nominating Committee	7
A Four Week Walk with God	8
Advent & Christmas	9
Annual Meeting 1/29	10
Christmas Fair	10
Birthdays & Anniversaries	11



9:00 a.m.
First Sundays

Life
Together

www.stpaulsmaine.org

Sunday, December 4
2nd Sunday of Advent



Advent Bird Mobile Making
follows in the Great Hall

A Note from the Rector *continued*

That second coming is certainly a mystery, but we say it in our creeds and believe that somehow it is possible. In the meantime, we are called to connect significantly with our God, our environment and our neighbor.

St. Paul's does this and is generous and prayerful about it. If ever there was a call to give time, experience and treasure, members of St. Paul's stand ready to give – always! Thank you. Just look at the vigor with which we approach the Christmas Fair! The proceeds are committed 100% to help others through our Outreach Ministry.

Our Finance Ministry Team, our Giving Ministry Team, our staff and ministry conveners have been working on our budget since September. We assessed a realistic figure of our expenses for 2017 and asked you to make a pledge if you haven't or make an increase in your pledge if you do pledge. Thank you. We are over 2/3 of our way to the \$301,732.00 pledge goal.

The first draft of our 2017 budget was over \$37,000 in deficit. This was not acceptable. Our next step was to go line by line, cut expenses and evaluate where we could make increases in income. We asked you to please pledge more as you are able. Again, thank you! We added a new, mid-year fund-raising opportunity. Finally, we are making modest increases in one-time building use income.

The cuts have been dramatic. I wanted to share with you how we were able to reduce the deficit from over \$37,000 to \$13,512 (it's not good to have a deficit budget. But it's much better!) Our staff

will not receive the cost of living increase for 2017. We will defer hiring our Christian Formation Director until March. We cut in half the Christian Formation budget and cut by \$1000 the Adult Formation budget. A planned reserve to buy a dishwasher for the kitchen was deferred to next year. I waived my dental insurance coverage.

We have not made cuts into fixed expenses as we know some may even increase this year. We have not cut the commitment we've made to give 6% of our 2015 pledged income to Outreach (this includes the proceeds from this year's fair).

This kind of responsible stewardship will give us confidence and courage in the work we have to do, that God is calling us to do for Christ's sake in 2017. I hope that the cuts we have made will not have a paralyzing effect on our work together in 2017. Yes, we must be mindful of our budgeting and spending. But no, we must not be timid in moving our work forward for Christ's sake in the world.

St. Paul's is living boldly into our incarnational faith as we offer our treasure and our selves to do ministry together...within our means, but with joy and abundance in our hearts. Thank you for all you give to the glory of God. May Christ's joy fill your household and your hearts during these holy seasons of Advent and Christmas.

Yours in admiration and affection,

Carolyn+

The food drive for Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program for November was a great success.

We collected over 110 lbs. of food and diapers. Our next food drive will be on December 4th during our First Sunday Life Together. I want to issue a special plea for this drive. I would like each person to please donate **TWO** items this month so that the clients of MCHPP will have a Christmas meal to celebrate this holy day. So far this year we have collected over 700 lbs. of food in support of MCHPP. **GREAT GOING!**

The clients and staff of MCHPP would like to thank you for your generous support during this past year. I have learned, as the person who delivers the food each month, that what we give is sincerely appreciated. Unfortunately, the need will still be there next year and years after that. Remember especially that there are many children who need your support. Please give generously on December 4th.

Yours in Christ, Bill Edman for the Outreach Ministry

What is God up to in our neighborhood? St. Paul's signs on to Living Local

Living Local---Whether you have or have not heard this phrase before in connection with our church, you certainly will be hearing much more in the months to come! At the November meeting, our Vestry voted to approve St. Paul's participation in this Diocesan effort, which began to take shape in May of this year and will develop further over the next year and a half.

For the past four years, Bishop Lane has been asking us to move beyond the church doors, to move our "front line" further out into our communities. He has offered ideas for getting to know our neighbors better, for building deeper relationships that go beyond our usual behaviors and responses. In a time when so much is changing, the Bishop challenges us to "find out what God is up to" in our neighborhoods, and to imagine new possibilities for living out Christ's Gospel with those in our communities.

St. Paul's has a long and rich history of assessing community needs and meeting them, of offering our space, time and treasure to those in need. We heard the Bishop's call and responded: Carolyn and Mary Lee began going out "two by two" into their neighborhood, and meeting to talk afterward. The Frontline Committee has been working to strengthen relationships with many of our community partners, including other area churches, Bowdoin College and social service agencies. The Gathering Place is a shining example of heeding the Bishop's call, and many who spend time there with the guests have spoken of their own transformation. Now we have the chance to deepen our engagement even more.

The Bishop and the Diocese have invited us to this next step, an 18-month process of adaptive change, called "Living Local: Joining God." Three other Dioceses--- Connecticut, East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia---will journey with us as we make experiments in how we might join God in our neighborhoods, come together locally to learn from the results, and share our insights more widely with other parishes in our state and other states.



This is a lay-led effort; clergy will be involved, but not "in charge" of the process. Each participating congregation has a guiding team whose members agree to spearhead the process in their parish, attend Diocesan training and meet with other parishes who are also participating. At St. Paul's the existing Frontline Committee will serve as the structure for this Guiding Team; the team members will include some of the current Frontline members as well as other parishioners with a passion and capacity for this work. The Diocese hopes to provide a coach to each congregation to help in clarifying insights and identifying new behaviors. Each participating congregation will receive funding from the Diocese.

The outline of this process is as follows:

1. Practice listening to God through the Word. This will happen among ourselves using a specific process. Our Vestry is already engaging monthly in this practice.
2. Engage in listening to one another within the congregation.
3. Journey into the communities around our congregation to listen to our neighbors and to discern what the Spirit of God might be up to in these places.
4. Participate in trying new behaviors to better relate to and engage those who are present in our communities.

(Continued on page 5)

From the Music Desk

The holidays. Hmmm. What do those two words conjure up for you? A more-than-hecktic, overly-filled schedule? Excess number of parties, gatherings, and concerts to attend? Too much of extraordinary culinary delights? Anxiety about those with whom you'll visit or have as houseguests, whether family or friends? Maybe all of the above.

When some of the anticipation and anxiety connected with the hubbub that becomes normal between now and New Year's, my heart searches for an anchor, for some word, sign, or piece of inspiration to keep me grounded, focused, unmoved, calm. The Moravians seemed to understand this need and helped me find my bearings one year when invited to a New Year's Eve service.

During the hour or so I spent with the Moravians that night we sang a particular hymn during which we all received a 4" x 6" notecard. On one side were the words to a hymn and on the reverse a single word, or in their vernacular, a 'watchword' to keep in mind throughout the coming year. When I thought of the labor of love shown by a group of parishioners who fashioned these cards, it seemed ironic that without my telling them ahead of time, the watchword was just what I needed for improved focus, for a blinder while traveling through the months ahead.

From my Adventist background the seasonal term 'Advent' has several layers of me, the primary focus being not the first Advent (time of waiting for the Messiah) but the second Advent referenced in Revelation. Not until I began working for other churches did I realize that I'd missed half the game plan! Since 1980 or so I've had the joy of celebrating the first Advent each year...and who can resist the anticipated arrival of a new child?!?

Here are the watchwords I've chosen for Advent 2016: wait, watch, and wonder. Wait; develop patience and an acceptance of God's timing. Watch: be more keenly aware of all around you, especially those for whom Advent may not be a joyful, spiritually positive time. Wonder: find again

the child-like anticipation of The Birth – and maybe a new piece of hope, joy, love, and peace cultivated by what hits your senses. Find a scripture and song that illustrate these themes.

My prayer for all who will worship at St. Paul's during Advent 2016 is a simple one: let's open our doors and welcome all to wait in anticipation, watch as the candles of our Advent wreath eventually lead to the lighting of the Christ candle, and wonder at the awesomeness of Who we are celebrating.

Then come, one and all, for our two Christmas Eve services – 4 and 7:30 p.m. The early service will feature a come-as-you-are pageant with costumes at the ready, a pick-up anthem all arriving children will learn to share, and music shared by a variety of parishioners. The 7:30 service will feature the Adult Choir in a 30-minute prelude of carols and be given a special touch by four guest string players from the Portland area.

Waiting, watching, and wondering with you,

Randy Day

Director of Music Ministries



Wait, Watch, and Wonder

Adult Formation, What's on Tap for December?

What is the perfect antidote to all the hectic busyness that accompanies the run-up to Christmas? **A Quiet Morning** with the Rev. Mary Lee Wile, of course. If you feel the need to take a breath, to step back, and to re-center yourself, please consider attending "Breathe In; Breathe Out" on Saturday, December 10, 9:00-12:30. A simple lunch will be included, so it would be helpful if you would call the church office or speak with Mary Lee if you plan to attend.

This Advent Quiet Morning will explore the Incarnation we celebrate at Christmas and our own reality as incarnate beings who have both breath and body, spirit and flesh. Two meditations will be offered, each followed by periods of extended silence. In the midst of a very busy season, this program is intended to offer attendees a quiet pause, one that refreshes and reinvigorates. Make the time to come; you'll be glad you did.

Pam Nugent

Adult Christian Formation



Living Local continued

(Continued from page 3)

5. Reflect on these behaviors to discover where God may be inviting our congregation to relate to, walk with and learn from our neighbors.
6. Decide what further actions we will take as we live into a new future together.

It is important to note that this does NOT mean we are throwing out all we hold dear as Episcopalians and members of St. Paul's. At its best, this process will weave through our works and worship, enriching and strengthening our relationships. At the Vestry meeting, Linda Ashe-Ford put it well when she observed that for many years we have made decisions and set up programs based on our seeing through a particular "lens," and that trying out a new "lens" or "lenses" may help us engage with our neighbors and serve our parishioners in even better

ways. Praise God, we have been offered this path!

If you would like more information, please visit the Diocesan website page

http://www.episcopalmaine.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=235:joining-god-in-the-neighborhood&catid=69&Itemid=128

More information will be coming soon. In the meantime, please feel free to share your questions and comments with me or Caroline Russell at any time.

Faithfully yours, and on behalf of the Guiding Team,

Myrna Koonce

“Ticket for a Can”



Food Drive Raffle

Bring a can, get a ticket!

In December, to help encourage food donations to the Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program, the Youth Group will raffle off a basket of local goods, gift cards and services. Each food item (“can”) is worth one ticket; tickets will be given on Sunday mornings, December 4, 11, and 18 when food is brought to church.

The drawing will be held **Friday, December 23**, at the supper following parish caroling. MCHPP and the youth group thank you!



Neighborhood Caroling and Hot Soup Supper

Led by St. Paul’s Youth Group

Friday, December 23, 5:30 pm, St. Paul’s

All are invited! Join us as we stroll and sing Christmas favorites in the neighborhood around the church, then share fellowship over a warm supper of soup and bread in the Great Hall.

Let’s rejoice together!



Giving Ministry

Over the past few days, some folks asked me what happened to the Vanco "form" to allow them to update their pledge. Using the formula that for every comment, there are several more who expected the form, but never asked, I thought we might want to send something out. The folks who spoke to me were moderately computer capable; I gave them basic instructions and said to call if they encountered problems. So, I thought we might publish the following:

Pledging. Updating Automatic Pledging: Some have asked about the Vanco form used to begin or update automatic pledging. Although we opted not to include the form with pledge card, copies are available in the office or via this link ([Vanco form](#)). Alternatively, if you have even basic computer skills, you can begin and/or update pledge yourself via St. Paul's web site (www.stpaulsmaine.org): Having a blank check at hand, open the web site, click on the "Make a Donation" button (found on every page). You will be asked to "Create a Profile" by providing your email address, a password, and bank account data (a picture will help you "read" your blank check). That's it! You are now ready to enter your pledge amount, frequency of the deduction

(monthly, weekly, yearly), and to confirm the account (partially identified by numbers and xxx's). Click to confirm and you will receive an email confirming your action. Problems? Call the office. You can use this system for holiday donations, flowers or other donations IMO (in memory of) or IHO (in honor of) whenever appropriate to your personal circumstances.

Paul Womer

During our pledge drive, it was often stated that every gift, regardless of amount, counts and is appreciated. As of this month, parishioners who shopped at Amazon and designated St. Paul's as a beneficiary of the Amazon Smile program enabled St. Paul's to receive nearly \$125.00.

Thank you.

Nominating Committee

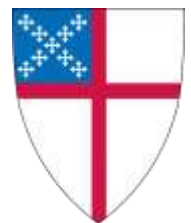
The Vestry is pleased to announce the Nominating Committee for 2016:

Pat Ryan

Linda Ashe-Ford

Emily Levine

The Nominating Committee is receiving names for 3 three-year terms to the Vestry, 1 one-year term to the Vestry, 5 one-year positions for Diocesan Convention delegates, and 3 one-year positions for alternates. If you wish to know more, please contact one of the Nominating Committee members, the Wardens or Rector.



Communicants in Good Standing are qualified to be nominated: All communicants of this Church who for the previous year have been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and have been faithful in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God, are to be considered communicants in good standing.

A Four Week Walk With God

This Epiphany, you are invited to participate in a Four-Week Walk With God, an opportunity to learn more about the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius Loyola, that offers an opportunity to expand and deepen your relationship with God.

Beginning on Sunday, January 8, and ending on Sunday, February 12, participants will make a commitment to daily prayer and reflection based on Scripture, and to meet once a week with a prayer guide, who is experienced in helping people follow the spiritual path developed by St. Ignatius. While Ignatian prayer is generally associated with the Roman Catholic tradition, this way of praying based on the Spiritual Exercises has been a source of grace and hope for people of many different faith traditions.

Applications need to be in soon so materials can be ordered in time.

More information below or contact the following for information and an application form.

Rev. Mary Ann Hoy
mannhoy@gmail.com
207-650-6346
or
The Rev. Ellen Shaver
ellenshaver@comcast.net
207-798-4852



We, a partnership between the Jesuits of Maine, Cheverus High School, Our Lady of Hope Parish and Protestant and Catholic Spiritual Directors and retreat Guides in Central and Southern Maine, all trained in the Ignatian Spiritual Tradition, offer a four-week experience of seeking God in your life based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Ignatius founded the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in 1540, and his Exercises have been a source of grace and hope for many thousands of people: Catholics, Protestants, and others.

What will it involve? A commitment to daily prayer based on Scripture and short reflection questions, provided for each day. A weekly meeting (4 times total) with a “guide,” a woman or man experienced in assisting people to follow the Ignatian spiritual path.

What will I need? A desire to be closer to God

When? The retreat will begin with an opening meeting on Sunday January 8, 2017 at 2 PM at St. Pius X Hall (492 Ocean Ave, Portland) and end with a celebration and prayers of thanksgiving on Sunday February 12 at 2 PM. Location TBD. The weekly meeting with a guide, will be arranged by you and the person you will be seeing.

Cost? The cost of the “little red book” which we will provide and other materials is \$25.

Available guides / “companions for the journey” All are trained in the Ignatian spiritual tradition.

Christopher O’Neil -RC
Fr. Jack d’Anjou SJ
Elinor Melley (K’bunk) -RC
John Fagan, SJ
Mr. James Ferus, SJ
Jane Hartwell – Episcopal
Fr. Paul Sullivan SJ
Carole Bridges (Scarborough) - RC
Fr. George Collins, SJ
Rev. Mary Ann Hoy (Bath-Portl.) Episcopal
Ellie Flavin (Kbunk) –RC
Rev. Ellen Shaver (Brunswick) – Episcopal
Fr. Donal MacVeigh, SJ
Rev. Gail Chandler (Kbunk) - Episcopal

How do I get involved? Fill out the simple registration on the back side of this sheet. Let us know your first and second choices of persons to be your guide (if you have any preferences). If you want more information before making any decision, then tell us that. Return to us at Our Lady of Hope Parish 673 Stevens Ave., Portland, ME 04103,

via our website (www.ourladyhopemaine.org) or JHartwell@episcopalmaine.org

Application Deadline – December 10, 2016



A dvent & Christmas

Prayer Vigil for Standing Rock

Sunday, December 4 1:00 pm—2 pm on the Brunswick Green (the Mall)

Twenty-fourth Annual Festival of Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 4 3:00 pm—4:30 pm Location: St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

Tedford Housing Annual Memorial Service

Wednesday, December 21 5:30 pm Location: Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick
Remembering those of our homeless neighbors who have died.

Blue Christmas Holy Eucharist

Thursday, December 22, 11:00 am Location: St. Paul's

Neighborhood Caroling and Hot Soup Supper

Friday, December 23, 5:30 pm, Location: St. Paul's Led by the Youth Group

Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24

Family Worship

3:15 pm Come as you are “pick up choir” and pageant costume fitting
4:00 pm Holy Eucharist with come as you are pageant

Solemn Candlelight Eucharist

7:00 pm Prelude - Choir music, instrumental music and hymn-singing
7:30 pm Solemn Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist
with Adult Choir and String Quartet

Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25

Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m.

New Year's Day Sunday, January 1

Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m.



Looking Ahead

St. Paul's Annual Meeting Sunday, January 29 Worship at 10:00 am Annual Meeting to follow

Reminder: Annual Reports from Ministry Team
Chairpersons are due to the parish office by January 3.

Christmas Fair, December 4



Christmas Corner, new this year.

Thanks to all who helped hold the 80th St. Paul's Christmas Fair! Preparations are in full swing as this issue is being printed.



Treasures being unwrapped and priced.



Cooks in the kitchen, Christmas Café will serve lunch 11-1. Come eat it smells delicious!

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday!

12/02 Hugh Savage
12/03 Sally Jeanne Kappler
12/04 Rebecca Schuman
12/06 Ann Peden
12/07 Robert Brownell
12/09 Cameran Coyne
12/10 Meghan Schofield
12/11 Lexi Weller
12/12 Sean Clegg
12/12 Emily Swan
12/13 Callum Smith
12/15 Emma Nickerson
12/15 Sharon Pedersen
12/17 Keely Forestell
12/18 Jonathan Appleyard
12/21 James Ford
12/22 Hope Haug
12/22 Mira Levine
12/23 Marcia Clayton
12/25 Nicholas Smith
12/27 Isak Harrington
12/27 Noah Harrington
12/27 Mimi Havinga

12/29 Hannah Judd
12/30 Charles Mull
12/30 Jordan Stanley

Happy Anniversary!

Hugh & Caroline Savage 12/28
Mark & Beth Ann Nickerson 12/30



If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please let the office know so that we may update our files.

The Messenger is published monthly, excluding January and with a combined July/August issue. It is emailed to the parish. Paper copies are available at the church for those who prefer them. It is also mailed to those who do not have email. **Please send submissions for the February issue by January 20.** Articles may be emailed to stpauls@stpaulsmaine.org or placed in Susan Tyler's box in the parish office.

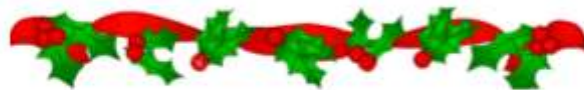
ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL
CHURCH
DECEMBER 2016

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E-mail: stpauls@stpaulsmaine.org

The Rev. Carolyn Eklund, Rector
The Rev. Mary Lee Wile, Deacon
The Rev. Chick Carroll, Deacon
Pat Ryan, Senior Warden
Paul Womer, Junior Warden
Randy Day, Music Ministry Director
Susan Tyler, Parish Administrator
Melanie Chicoria, Administrative Assistant
Kimmy Edwards, Nursery Caregiver
Aubrey Farmer, Sexton

We're on the web!

www.StPaulsMaine.org
and Facebook



St. Paul's Church
27 Pleasant Street

CHRISTMAS FAIR

Saturday, December 3
9:00 – 2:00

