

# The Messenger

JULY/AUGUST 2020

## A NOTE FROM THE RECTOR

by The Rev. Carolyn H. Eklund



In his book, “Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology,” Gordon W. Lathrop writes about the meaning of Christians gathering for worship in this way, “On Sunday, throughout the world, Christians assemble to do their rituals, to sing and say their words, and do their holy actions.” He asks, “Is the Sunday meeting – the liturgy, the mass, the worship service – simply the survival of a collection of quaint customs from a more secure and simple time? Or do its symbolic interactions propose to us a realistic pattern for interpreting our world, for containing our active experiences, and for enabling action and hope?”

I think it’s safe to say for the people of St. Paul’s, the “Sunday meeting” for the last four months has been more than symbolic meanings that give us hope. For the sake of limiting the spread of the pandemic right here in our neighborhood, we have sought to bring meaning, give glory to God and figure out ways to serve God without physically gathering, consecrating things, blessing and giving Eucharist and congregational singing. We are deriving new meaning, leaning more on the Word in our services through electronic worship and temporarily letting go of our longing for the “assembly” and Eucharist.

Gordon W. Lathrop could not have dreamed that a virus pandemic would temporarily put an end to Christian in-person ritual. Indeed, even standing together in an enclosed space reciting our creeds and prayers in unison puts the gathered body at risk. We have not been able to offer Eucharist and do not know when that time will come. It will come, certainly, but it will look different. For now, we rely on electronic worship, and if there is to be a Eucharist, it will viewed on line and will include individual words of intention for a “Spiritual Eucharist” that acknowledges the priest’s calling down of God’s Spirit to consecrate the elements followed by the words spoken on behalf of those who are prevented from taking in the Sacrament.

For four months St. Paul’s has temporarily ended in-person worship. We have been nourished by Scripture readings, the Prayers, the Sermons and musical selections. We have had opportunities to see one another by electronic means. But we are not in the church building which has remained closed to worship and gatherings. We do feel the ache and longing of not being together physically. Many of us desire deeply to return to a service of Holy Eucharist. We miss the physical action of taking Christ’s elements to strengthen our spirit each week.

The St. Paul’s Future Planning Team has met weekly via Zoom during this time of “physical distancing” to study the unfolding research and epidemiology of the coronavirus in addition to how other institutions are making their decisions of whether or not to open and how.

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This team has been communicating to us regularly. We have held a virtual Coffee Hour Town Hall to hear from you. And we have just completed a survey of the congregation to learn in-depth your opinions of these past four months of worship and being the body of Christ in a pandemic. We have also received many written comments from you that will help us steer forward.

I thank God for this faithful and competent team led by **Pat Ryan** and **Paul Womer**. Thank you to **Myrna Koonce, Katie Holicky, Cliff Ruprecht, Hugh Savage, Nancy Whitehouse, Susan Tyler, Ralph Thivierge** for entering into this work with faith, hope and a great amount of reason and common sense.

And thank YOU for your feedback. It was swift and reflects how deeply engaged you are in St. Paul's and committed to worship and service. I will make a general summary of the survey in this article. But you may receive the full copy with the written comments by contacting the Parish Office during our open hours. Call ahead to make sure someone is there to open the door and offer you a mask!

#### **SUMMARY OF SURVEY**

Over the two-week period the survey was open for responses, we received 88 responses. Measured against Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) which is the average of in-person worship over a year, a measure of active members, (160 ASA), the response rate was just over 50%. That is unusually high as surveys go. For surveys we've conducted at St. Paul's in the past, this high rate is not unusual. We are a very engaged, committed and motivated congregation! Thank you for your feedback!

Of the 88 people who completed the survey, 80 said they have connected electronically with worship during the period of building closure. There is a high level of satisfaction with 10:30 Sunday Morning Prayer livestream: 75% indicated Satisfied, 3% Unsatisfied and 22% said Not Applicable.

Family Worship at 9:30 on Sunday is via Zoom and got started several Sundays later than Morning Prayer. Of the people that engage with Family Worship, 20% say they are Satisfied, 4% indicated Unsatisfied with the remainder saying Not Applicable.

At the beginning of the pandemic immediately after we closed the building we began to offer daily prayer live stream on our St. Paul's Facebook page. Each day Morning Prayer and Compline have been offered for the past four months.

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You indicated a high frequency of “attending” one of more of these prayer offerings: 56% Frequently; 33% Sometimes; 6% Never.

The Future Planning Team also wished to assess the depth of desire for Eucharist and the need to come to the Nave individually to pray. The survey asked you about the level of desire for Eucharist: 39% of you said “No Desire;” 34% said “Some Desire”; 19% said “Much Desire;” and 6% “Other.” These responses seem to indicate that while we are a parish that is steeped in gathering for Eucharist, we remain strong in patience and can continue to weather this time of physical separation from one another and our altar.

In the comments, some of you indicated that electronic worship, Sunday Morning Prayer is not as inspiring as a service of Eucharist in the church together. But overall, the comments were positive because of the consistently high quality of preaching, the expanding presence of lay readers and generally, the music provided, though there was feedback that asked for more singing from the choir and the possibility of Randy Day playing the organ in the church instead of the electronic piano in my house.

We asked about Zoom Coffee Hour. Those results were mixed. Generally, Zoom Coffee Hour was seen as a bit awkward, though a few indicated that for them, Coffee Hour in the Great Hall is awkward. There was an appreciation to be able to see one another and catch up.

We asked about warm-weather outdoor small gatherings that follow CDC precautions. There was enough interest in this that the staff, clergy and ministry groups of St. Paul’s is actively preparing a policy and guidelines for this kind of in-person meeting. Some of you are already meeting outdoors and practicing the proper precautions.

There was modest interest in being able to come into the Nave for prayer one-by-one. It is possible that calling ahead to make an appointment for a limited time to pray during office hours in the Nave wearing a mask would be possible. However, the building will remain closed and restrooms will not be open for use.

Finally, your high level of engagement, interest and commitment was indicated by your written responses to the survey. On every question in which we invited

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written comments, 20 or more comments were given. At the end of the survey when asked to give general comments we received 30.

In general, you are supportive of the worship planning and the many offerings of worship and Zoom gatherings for meetings. With the exception of a desire for more choir recordings, missing the organ and missing Eucharist, your feedback told us that we are offering what you and your family need for spiritual nurturing during this unprecedented pandemic crisis.

We are aware that even though the response rate to the survey was very high, we seem to have heard back almost exclusively from respondents who are attending online worship in one way or another. We are always concerned for the voices we aren't hearing or the people we aren't reaching. You can obtain a hard copy of the survey from the Parish Office. Call ahead in order to access the building.

I hope you will share this information with anyone you think might not have received it, and if you or someone you know has feedback they haven't been able to provide about how we are handling the pandemic or any for any other aspect of our parish life, please reach out to the clergy or wardens.

While our "Christian assembly" does not gather in person now, we have found ways by God's grace, modern technology and with an abundance of patience to gather, to hear God's word, pray and derive meaning in our troubling times. What this pandemic has taught me is that our faith is deep, our love of God is constant, our joy in being with each other is infectious and our generosity in serving our neighbors in need is expansive.

Thanks be to God!



## FROM THE ASSISTANT RECTOR

by The Rev. Katie Holicky, Assistant Rector for Children and Youth

I was recently talking with a friend who shared they are spending the summer as a “solar panel”. At first I thought, “Wow! Can I get you some extra sunscreen?!”. Then, as I continued to listen I realized the fullness of the gift that was just shared with me. Solar panels soak up energy... the stuff that keeps life going. Solar panels adjust to where the light is coming from or are at least positioned to soak up as much as possible. So what does it mean for us to be solar panels? I would guess it starts with setting the intention to be present to the things that fill us up. Especially in these warm months. To position ourselves to take time storing up all energy and goodness that we can. Knowing that this goodness will be part of what gets us through these colder months. Knowing that this will not be a typical winter here in Maine.



Here at St. Paul’s we have already set out on the path to be summer solar panels. Through various ways we are seeking and finding good connections and encouraging one another. We bask in the gift of feeling God in the outdoors here in our beloved Maine, we are getting creative around physical distanced social gatherings, and are settling more deeply into the truth that this Body of Christ is connected and fed through robust online worship even as we long for what once was. It has been a joy to see this new and unexpected work of soaking it all up unfold. Over the last week I have watched the joy of gathering for family small groups in the Garden and other small groups in the church forming over fellowship and justice alike. I have seen us digging deeper in our family worship as we add in prayers and live music. I have seen and felt the goodness we are all being called to fill ourselves with this season.

And I am so thankful, because the truth is this season is not just beautiful... it is hard. It is messy and filled with questions and wrestling with deep wounds that we might not have even realized we are carrying. We see our black siblings cry out for justice and as we listen and learn we wonder, “what do we do next?”

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How do we tend to the wounds of pandemic, an economic crisis, and the need for racial justice all at once? Friends, I wish I had all of the answers. However, what I know is true at the end of every day is:

1. God loves us and walks with us.
2. We walk together.
3. For us to get anywhere in the midst of all of this we have to take care of ourselves in the midst of caring for each other... spending a season as solar panels.

So, how can you spend this season as a “solar panel”? What would God have you soak up to sustain you? Let us take extra time to tend to ourselves and each other in this season, that while bursting with beauty, is also filled with the weight of all that is.





## THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OFFERS A 10-SESSION RESOURCE ON RACE & FAITH CALLED SACRED GROUND

by The Rev. Carolyn H. Eklund

The concern for racial justice and equality has become a primary focus of many people in our parish, particularly as reports of protests against police killings of unarmed Black people, the disparity of healthcare for Black people and Native people and the increasing abuse of immigrants, people of Asian and Latino descent have emerged. This hard news has caused many of you to contact me and ask, “What can we do as a parish?”

I am proud and delighted to share with you that The Episcopal Church offers to our members a 10-session program called, Sacred Ground: A Film-based Dialogue Series on Race and Faith. Because so many of you have been concerned to join the racial justice conversation of Sacred Ground, we have been able to organize three small dialogue groups at St. Paul’s with trained facilitators for each group. Thank you, Linda Ashe-Ford for volunteering to lead the facilitator training. Your great gifts, experience and heart have been gifts to us.

We will be launching these three groups in the next couple of weeks. While the groups are closed for any new members, we are taking names for the formation of a future group, possibly in late fall or winter. Please contact the Parish Office if you wish to add your name to the list.

### WHAT IS THE SACRED GROUND RACE DIALOGUE SERIES?

- Sacred Ground is a sensitive, prayerful resource that creates space for difficult but respectful and transformative dialogue on race and racism.
- It invites participants to walk back through history in order to peel away the layers that brought us to today, reflecting on family histories and stories, as well as important narratives that shape the collective American story.
- It holds as a guiding star the vision of beloved community – where all people are honored and protected and nurtured as beloved children of God, where we weep at one another’s pain and seek one another’s flourishing.

## CHRISTMAS FAIR

by Jan DiBlieu

Christmas in July? Well, not exactly. But we're beginning to think about how we can raise funds for Outreach this year, given that we're probably not going to be able to have the St. Paul's Christmas Fair in the same form as in years past.



There's a lot of enthusiasm for holding a fair. We're just not sure exactly what form it can safely take. In coming weeks the Vestry and the Future Planning Committee will be talking with the folks who help stage the fair to come up with the best plan.

Perhaps the fair will be held earlier than usual, so we can have some outside tables. Perhaps it will be held over several days, spaced weeks and even months apart so that the usual number of items can be offered, while keeping crowd numbers down. Perhaps much of it will be online. We will let you know as our plans solidify—though the changing trajectory of the virus will likely require us to be flexible in laying down any road map.

The fair is a major source of income for St. Paul's Outreach fund. With the uncertainty surrounding planned events and the economic stress caused by the virus, raising money for Outreach is more important—and more difficult—than ever. Please consider making a donation to the Outreach fund—and please do come to the Fair, in whatever form we're able to have it. We'll send more news as soon as we can.

Many, many thanks, Jan DeBlieu

## FROM THE MUSIC DESK.. CONTINUED

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Lastly, this season was bittersweet as St. Paul's has lost a musical leader of many years, our own G. Cameron Smith – composer, conductor, actor, soccer coach, Dad, husband, lector with a voice to remember, and one who walked in humility. Cam blessed St. Paul's with a large opus of choral works we have sung, and will continue to sing as the years go by. His personal touch on African-American spirituals, hymns, and his own tunes and texts will keep on inspiring generations to come.

Be safe and well these summer months. See you in virtual worship!





## A NOTE FROM THE MUSIC DESK

by Randy Day, Music Ministry Director

The phrase “What a season!” is a trite, all-too-simplistic way of describing the last months of St. Paul’s Choir 2019-2020 months of service. During our last regularly scheduled Zoom choir rehearsal for the summer last night (Wednesday, 6/24), I could only think of a two-word summation: “Thank you.”

Never in my entire career have I had to not be in a church building for worship except for the occasional weather event, or perhaps when illness struck. Never have I had to sit in the Rector's front hallway, out of sight of everyone viewing the service, or even Rev. Eklund, trying mightily to ‘feel’ as if I was not only ‘in worship’ but also experiencing a sense of communion with the rest of the ‘attendees.’

What St. Paul’s Choir has had to do is deal a bit more intimately with a new layer of communication: technology. Our new moniker – St. Paul’s Virtual Choir – connotes a new reality, one where we are out there in the ether, primarily at home, attempting to assimilate what happens when we are all in the same room, conducted and accompanied as one. As the leader of this creative and heart-led ensemble, I’m deeply grateful for their ingenuity and wish for all of you to have a song to hear, a hymn to share. They’ve dug down into their own wells of courage, no matter the odds, and started out on a new adventure.

Our collective hats are off to Al Hipkins, mixer of our voices and dispenser of technological wisdom. When you have heard our early tries at this virtual twist in worship, he was at the helm, guiding our efforts into the best possible blend. Thank you, Al, for volunteering to bring our individual recordings into a state of oneness.

I would also wish to thank Rev. Katie Holicky and Rev. Carolyn Eklund for their guidance and hosting of worship on Sundays, especially those that involved members of St. Paul’s Virtual Choir. Both of you have helped create a seamless flow of individual offerings from multiple sites each week. You’ve led us spiritually and technologically.

Summer is now here, and we will have a mix of musical offerings during July and August. The 4th Sunday of each month we will share a recorded service provided by Diocesan leadership. The alternate Sundays will feature members of St. Paul’s Virtual Choir doing solos or duets, this summer from home. This will be another bend in the road as we learn the ‘how’ of doing so. Ahead of time I thank each one who will share his or her musical offering with all of us.

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## ST. PAUL'S GROUNDS USE

### **St. Paul's Policy for Use of Memorial Garden During Building Closure and Distancing Precautions**

**25 June 2020**

#### BACKGROUND

St. Paul's has closed the building for worship and public use since March 15, 2020 due to the precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as the coronavirus has become a dangerous, infectious pandemic. We have studied the emerging epidemiological data and scientific discoveries of this virus and have urged members and staff to take the precautions of thorough and frequent hand-washing, mask-wearing and distancing of six feet or more when interacting with others. New data has suggested that during the warmer months small gatherings outdoors observing the precautions are less dangerous than indoor gatherings. Because there is a deep desire to gather in person and because the basis of our faith is being in fellowship and ministry with one another, St. Paul's has created a policy for parishioners to be able to use the Memorial Garden observing CDC guidelines. We will reach out to our 12-Step groups and also offer the space on a case-by-case basis for use to non-profit community organizations.

#### POLICY

Precautions to Reduce Threat of Infection or Outbreak in Outdoor Settings on Grounds of St. Paul's

1. Each group must contact the St. Paul's Parish Administrator to reserve space and review the guidelines. Susan Tyler, [stpauls@stpaulsmaine.org](mailto:stpauls@stpaulsmaine.org)
2. St. Paul's may close the Memorial Garden at any time if there is an outbreak.
3. Group contact person will keep a list of names and phone numbers (or other contact information) of people in attendance in the remote chance there is need for outbreak contact tracing. (12-Step Groups may designate the "trusted servant" for this list.)
4. Groups of no more than 10 are allowed. Note: Seating other than picnic tables and stone benches is not provided.
5. Chairs and people must be six feet or more apart from each other at all times.
6. Each person must wear a mask. (Once seated, they may remove it.)
7. All food and drink must be brought in by individual and taken out by the same individual.



8. Hosts must provide hand sanitizer and
9. Meetings may not exceed one hour in length.
10. Restrooms indoors are not available.
11. Building remains closed and locked.

The Policy for St. Paul's Memorial Garden at All Times is Posted at the entrance to the garden off the parking lot.

1. Open from dawn until dusk.
2. No smoking or alcohol use
3. No fires (only enclosed charcoal grilling is permitted).
4. No trash left behind.
5. No camping.

## 175TH CELEBRATION

by Carol Martin, 175th Celebration Chair

### Celebration of gratitude for 175 years

Parishioners at St. Paul's are working on making and/or collecting 175 warm items for neighbors in need of them, to celebrate our church's 175th anniversary. The collection is growing! We had 10 items last month; this month, we have at least 22 items completed (counting pairs of socks, gloves, and mittens as one item), and counting. Join in and help to grow the pile! If you have completed items we don't know about, please drop a line to Carol Martin ([cmartin@northpark.edu](mailto:cmartin@northpark.edu)), so that we know how far we still need to go.

Small items are good summer projects . . . and they're easy enough to make on our own, though the project is one we can work on together. If you are interested in taking part but need yarn to work with, please let either Carol or Charla Spann know; we have several stashes to draw upon.



We'd like to complete our project by October, before the weather turns cold. Thanks for your help!





## FROM EARTHCARE

by Martha Burt, Eathcare Ministry.

I have been reading over parts of Pope Francis' Encyclical Letter: *On Care For Our Common Home*. It is a letter in which he reminds us over and over that we have a God-given responsibility to preserve and sustain the earth's resources for this and future generations. But beyond that, he urges that we can only do this if we as citizens/governments develop national and international policies that restore and care for our environment.

I think that, if one is not working with a group that is specifically involved in environmental work, [that is, building wind turbines, installing solar panels, developing recycle alternatives, building city rooftop gardens...] one can "make a difference" by contributing to any number of dedicated groups working on policy change. So I thought I would list my top groups, and invite people to add to the list. These groups lobby congress; their attorneys and experts work with citizens, businesses, even countries, to fight for environmental justice, to preserve land, air and water resources, to advance governmental change, accountability, and policy, and much more. I apologize for not giving more information on these organizations. Please find them on-line. There are so many other excellent organizations.

*Union of Concerned Scientists*

*Environmental Defense Fund*

*Friends Committee on National Legislation*

*Citizen's Climate Lobby*

*The Nature Conservancy*

*Natural Resources Defense Council of Maine*

*Brunswick Land Trust [your local land trust]*

Poem by e. e. cummings

i thank You God for most this amazing  
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees  
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything  
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,  
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth  
day of life and of love and wings:and of the gay  
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing  
breathing any-lifted from the no  
of all nothing-human merely being  
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and  
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)





## BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

### Happy Birthday

Caroline Nickerson 7/4  
 Beth Ann Nickerson 7/5  
 Anna Bailey 7/6  
 Alison Bennie 7/6  
 George Peck 7/6  
 Sarah Arnold 7/7  
 Caroline Russell 7/7  
 Nancy Pennell 7/8  
 Ritalee Doty 7/9  
 Pamela Nugent 7/9  
 Elizabeth Guerette 7/10  
 Alan Shaver 7/11  
 Mary Lou Brown 7/13  
 Nancy Adams 7/17  
 Mark Nickerson 7/18  
 June Coffin 7/19  
 Lauren Jacobs 7/21  
 Patricia Ford 7/22  
 Sophia Bosko 7/24  
 Andrew Tyler 7/24  
 Carol Haskins 7/26  
 Nancy Gardner 7/28  
 Jessica Hayward 7/29  
 Robbie Hayward 7/29  
 Catherine Ranen 7/30  
 Nicholas Rendell 7/30  
 Jonathan Hopkins 7/31  
 Angus King 7/31

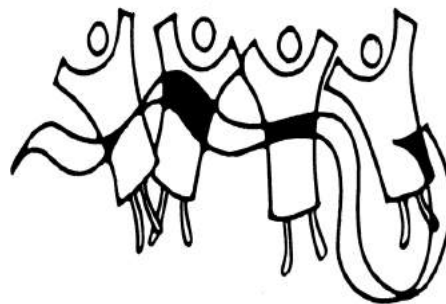
Carolyn Eklund 8/5  
 Nancy Moore 8/5  
 Lisa Sholtis 8/6  
 Charla Spann 8/7  
 Zoe Bolton 8/9  
 Madeleine Msall 8/9  
 Kathleen Robinson 8/9  
 Nora Leigh 8/15  
 Johanna Wigg 8/15  
 Mason Lavigne 8/16  
 Julie Cribbey 8/17  
 Gil Peterson 8/19  
 William Martens 8/21  
 Donna Thivierge 8/21  
 Teddy Murphy 8/22  
 Eleanor Brown 8/25  
 Jean Guerette 8/27  
 Lois Kwantz 8/28  
 Michael Schuman 8/28  
 Susan McCracken 8/29  
 David Kwantz 8/31  
 Erik Plunkett 8/31

### Happy Anniversary

Bob & Karin Jackson 7/23  
 Jean & Rob Mulligan 7/23  
 Richard & Beverly Nickerson 8/12  
 Bob & Julia Walkling 8/15  
 Angela & Sean Clegg 8/18  
 Kathleen & Steve Carey 8/29

Don't  
 see your  
 birthday or  
 anniversary?

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 September issue by August 21**  
 Articles may be emailed to [stpauls@stpaulsmaine.org](mailto:stpauls@stpaulsmaine.org)



## STAFF & LEADERSHIP

The Rev. Carolyn H. Eklund, Rector

The Rev. Katie Holicky, Assistant Rector for Children & Youth

The Rev. Mary Lee Wile, Deacon

Cliff Ruprecht, Senior Warden

Johanna Wigg, Junior Warden

Randy Day, Music Ministry Director

Susan Tyler, Parish Administrator

Carolyn Farr, Administrative Assistant

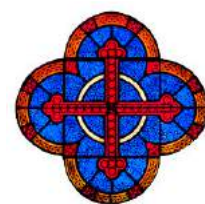
Jane Redlon, Nursery Caregiver

Lynn Johnson, Assistant Nursery Caregiver

Aubrey Farmer, Sexton

### Stay in touch!

- Check out our website for more details!  
[stpaulsmaine.org](http://stpaulsmaine.org)
- Follow us on Facebook!
- Sign up for our weekly emails!
- Please consider enrolling in electronic giving, it is a convenient way to provide consistent financial support to the church. See [stpaulsmaine.org](http://stpaulsmaine.org) to enroll



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