

The Messenger

FEBRUARY 2022



175 Years of Worship
and Service

RECTOR'S COLUMN

by The Rev. Carolyn H. Eklund

Nearly two years ago when we closed our building and ended in-person gatherings including worship, St. Paul's immediately started offering Daily Morning Prayer and Compline. We offered these virtual prayer gatherings on Facebook Live out of our homes. The hunger for prayer and connection was deep.

Soon, those who tuned in put names of loved ones who needed prayer in the scroll and the prayer list began to grow. We offered special prayers for friends and loved ones who had contracted COVID or had died from it. We kept track of those who were ill, lonely, struggled with addiction, those in recovery, those in danger in their homes, our children, our parents, teachers, front-line workers. The list has grown and grown, and to this day, the faithful who tune in still ask for prayers.

Currently, we offer Facebook Live Morning Prayer and Compline Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursdays. Our Lay Worship Leaders and I find this round of prayer to be personally consoling and spiritually nurturing. One of the scripture reading options in Compline is from Matthew 11. The reading of the "comfortable words of Jesus" is our "go to" after a difficult day,

Jesus said, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30).

As a parish, we have been laden heavily these two years with worry, disruptions, sickness, care for aging parents, care for our children, grief over loved ones who have died, not to mention those parishioners who have worked these years on the front line while COVID has raged and mutated. When we closed our doors to worship, we said, "We'll be back in a couple of months." Never did we say, "We'll be back in a couple of years".

The stress, heartbreak and uncertainty have at times chipped away at our mental and spiritual health. My sister Marilyn who runs the COVID response phone lines, a huge operation for the University of San Diego and University of San Diego Medical Center has been on the front line since the beginning. She tells me that people are impatient and behaving worse and worse as the stress continues. She forwarded a plea posted on the LinkedIn page of the Second President and Chief Executive Officer at Scripps Health in response to an Op Ed that appeared in the "LA Times" about people venting anger on healthcare workers.

Chris Van Gorder writes, "Very real Op Ed by a critical care physician in San Diego. This is what we are seeing and have been talking about as well but it goes well beyond anti-vaxxers. There is an impatience and frustration that is boiling over into EDs [Emergency Departments] and hospitals. Please be kind – we're only trying to help."

"Please be kind. We are only trying to help." In the community of St. Paul's, Brunswick, Maine, we have a deep, loving and abiding community that cares for each other and those beyond our community. We love one another. We are kind to one another. And this we have done with grace and love even in this pandemic.

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However, the care-givers can from time-to-time grow worn, sad and become heavy-laden. We reach a point at times when we are not at our best. That is not to say we must always be at our best. Even Jesus grew worn and I'll bet he may have cussed out those money-changers in the Temple when he turned over their tables!

I have noticed some shortness in my own behavior. My swear words are sneaking back under my breath at times. (Guess what I will be giving up for Lent!). My sisters call me and we unload on each other, letting our frustrations and anger rip in empathy with each other. Even on sabbatical, I found myself apologizing to one of my guests for my ugly outburst. This guest had casually questioned my ability to technically function on my laptop. I let it rip and apologized afterward!

In the month of February in Maine, the winter hardens and it seems as if the future outlook is dark and cold. The COVID outlook seems just as dark and endless. No one can know when the pandemic will end. But our faith community offers abiding ways to nurture the spirit and connect deeply with God.

My dear friends, please be in touch with each other. I invite you to join the digital days of prayer on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, Facebook Live, 7:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. The weekly service of healing is Thursday. It is a Zoom gathering at 11:00 a.m. There are prayers, scripture readings, a homily with a conversation and virtual Laying on of Hands for Healing. Sundays are in-person for Eucharist that we've modified for the pandemic. We offer it digitally and in-person, 9:00 a.m. Family Eucharist and 10:30 a.m. Eucharist with choir.

Last week, Pam Nugent and I went over the offerings Adult Formation has planned for Lent and the spring. They are wonderful! They will be announced soon, and I hope you will sign up. We have not stopped weekly bible studies, Exploring the Sermon after Sunday worship and our small ministry group meetings. You are invited to nurture your soul by joining any of these offerings.

And most importantly, your clergy are here for you. It is our privilege and vocation to walk with those who are suffering and are heavy-laden. People have been reaching out to the Rev. Katie Holicky, the Rev. Mary Lee Wile and me with their troubles and worries. It is our pastoral calling to stand alongside you as you travel the uncertain roads of life.

We are strengthened by Christ's presence and words of comfort, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy burdened, and I will give you rest..." These are not called the "comfortable words" for nothing!

And, if at all possible, in the stresses and strains of this ongoing pandemic, may we all be kind. When you feel yourself becoming angry, wanting to cuss somebody out (I hate it that I know this behavior in me all too well!), becoming demanding or just cutting off an offending driver on the road, remember the "comfortable words of Jesus." "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

In gentleness, kindness and love,
The Rev. Carolyn H. Eklund, Rector



WALKING IN WINTER

by Rev. Katie Holiky

The first few weeks of January I had the gift of taking some time off. I am so thankful to our clergy and wardens, the staff, and our Family Ministry volunteers who made this time away possible. It was a restorative time of “stay-cation” where I got to get some good rest, read many books, knit, spend hours baking and cooking, and take many long walks during the coldest weeks of the year. While I enjoyed all of the rest and activities that allowed me a sense of spaciousness of self, I am particularly struck by the lessons I learned, or perhaps even relearned, from walking in winter.

There is a lot to take into account when going for walks in Maine during these cold months. The first lesson my heart absorbed was the lesson of layers. I had to take time to slow down and prepare myself for the journey ahead especially when wind chills dipped into the negatives. The practice of looking at the weather and talking through our layers and gear became a daily conversation in our house. I needed to pause and consider what I needed to feel as warm and safe as possible. How might I prepare for the journey to be out in the cold and bask in the beauty of creation?

Part of that preparation was also considering ice. Walking on ice was an invitation to not just better equip myself for more deeply learning this New England life skill, it was also an invitation to slow down and hold the intention of noticing what different colors and textures meant for my footing. How might my surroundings inform how I take my journey? Perhaps, my favorite aspect of ice on winter walks comes with the blessing of living just a few blocks away from Portland’s Back Cove. In slowing down to manage the terrain, we were able to see the way ice freezes over rocks at high tide, and the way the ice breaks making the rocks to appear as though they have exploded as the tide recedes. What perspective might I gain by not rushing the journey?

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WALKING IN WINTER

by Rev. Katie Holiky

Another lesson came to me by way of the Cove ducks. In our slow and steady pace Phil and I could see the daily communal practice of the way the ducks huddle together to keep warm. They looked so cozy as they pushed themselves together and tucked their heads into their bodies. As we walked along we noticed they would get moving when the sun hit their huddled mass. The ducks reminded me of the art and connection of sticking together, knowing when to slow down, and rest, and knowing when to get to work. How am I being invited to live more like ducks in winter? How is God inviting me to communal practices?

As I reflect on my time away with thanksgiving, I praise God for the ways in which the Spirit spoke to my soul through the practice of walking in winter. And I wonder... how might you slow down, notice what you need to feel prepared for the journey, stay open to new perspectives, stick together, and discern when you might rest and when you might get to work?

With gratitude and love,
Rev. Katie Holicky, Assistant Rector





NURSERY REOPENS - 2/6

Sunday, February 6th we will formally reopen the St. Paul's nursery! Families with small children are invited to utilize this ministry for care of young ones during worship. Care will be provided by our trained and vaccinated nursery staff.

The room and toys will be sanitized regularly. Children two and up should wear a mask.



ASH WEDNESDAY UPDATE

Save the Date Ash Wednesday 2022, March 2nd
7:30 am to 8:15 am - Ashes and Lenten bags will be distributed to all who come to the parking lot. We will give each person instructions for individual imposition of ashes, a lenten prayer and the Lenten Meditation book.

Noon - Ash Wednesday Liturgy with modified imposition of ashes and Eucharist in-person in the nave and on Facebook Live.





ST PAUL'S TRUTH TELLING INITIATIVE

by Andree Appel

An important mode of addressing racial justice in the church is taking the time to investigate our own stories. Often in our tradition we come to find that the land we stand on, the funds we have used to build our spaces, etc. are directly connected to the historical and continued oppression of people of color in this nation. The Racial Justice Council of the Diocese of Maine encourages each parish to spend time researching and discovering their own history and connections to financial gains connected to racism. This is hard and deep work. We often name this work as a mode of doing a forensic audit. This truth telling is important. It can be painful, and yet is necessary for us to do so that we may truly grapple with how God is calling us to move forward in the world with justice. We must know where we have been to understand where we are going.

Have you finished the Sacred Ground program and wonder what is next? Or are you interested in being a “citizen historian”? If so, please contact Andree Appel (andreeappel@gmail.com) about digging a little deeper into the history of St Paul's to see what we know, what we thought we knew, and what we might be surprised to learn.



SACRED GROUND

CONVERSATIONS
ABOUT RACE



FROM THE PARISH ADMINISTRATOR DESK

by Randy Day, Parish Administrator

“Welcome home!” How meaningful that greeting has been during these past three weeks. After nearly 2-1/2 years of being away from St. Paul’s, only being present on Wednesday evenings and Sundays, due to the Pandemic, the full gift of what St. Paul’s represents in ministry within and without is coming back to light....and I’m so blessed to spend more time with you once more.

You may wonder what a Parish Administrator does. I’ve been living into that inquiry these past weeks. One step at a time Carolyn Farr, Administrative Assistant, Karen Tucker, Communications Administrator, the Rector, and Nancy Whitehouse, our Treasurer, have gently brought me up to speed.

What I can tell you at this youthful stage of wearing this ‘hat’ is this: no two days are alike. There is joy in the office area. Folks seem to relish, as do I, time spent here together, and that same relish holds sway whether we are communicating by phone or Zoom. My gratitude for being invited to consider this position and a return to more hours working for you has been a boon to my spirit and a delightful adventure just begun.

During these first weeks and months of carrying out my duties, thank you for your patience as Carolyn Farr, Karen Tucker, and I find our way to definitive roles and the processes we need to take care of your needs. If you get pointed in a different direction than may have been taken in 2021, know that we will address each need as it comes to us.

We are working diligently to make sure that all contributions and pledges you’ve made for either 2021 or 2022 are being recorded accurately. Thank to each one who has e-mailed, called, or asked questions regarding your Statement of Contributions just e-mailed or sent by post.

For your support of the ministry of St. Paul’s, I tip my hat in gratitude.

With thankfulness,

Randy Day

Parish Administrator



FROM THE MUSIC DESK

by Randy Day, Music Ministry Director

Do any of your neighbors still have external Christmas lights lit? Or Christmas trees still decorated, white or colored bulbs casting patterns on the snow? My term for these folk is a liturgical one: Epiphany decorators at heart. Whether they are aware of the liturgical season of Epiphany or not, their continued decorative carry-over from Christmastide warms my heart and helps navigating the path my pups need to walk in those darker, early morning hours.

During the 2022 Annual Meeting I was struck with the ‘light’ emanating from everyone on the screen. Each person or persons in the gallery view of participants added to the overall illumination. That ‘light’ seemed to grow brighter as more and more details were underscored regarding various ministries carried out as St. Paul’s mission to the community and beyond. I also reflected on the joy experienced in the prior 10:30 a.m. service. We ‘marched’ in the ‘light of God’ accompanied by tambourines and other noise makers and the able leadership of the choirs. The joy of sound and text was contagious and continued emoting past the hour of worship.

If there would be any observation to bring to you in print, it would be the fact that St. Paul’s is a light, a beacon in the Brunswick/Topsham area. Each singer in the choir, every lector, each usher, and the light carried by Rev. Carolyn, Rev. Katie, and Deacon MaryLee declare quite brightly that St. Paul’s is a place of warmth, vitality, love, and compassion.

Throughout the remainder of Epiphany we will sing hymns and tunes and texts radiating with light, joy, and alleluias. We have so much for which to be grateful, and why not sing about it? Why not hear about it through the Word? I’ll close with two thoughts in that vein. How thankful I am for the choir members who have helped ‘light up’ the Nave with heart and voice since December 14, 2021. Carol Kalajainen, Leslie Brancart, Jane Knox-Voina, Myrna Koonce, Julia Walkling, Lois Kwantz, Bob Walkling, Fred Hollmann, and Dick Brautigam and taken the risk and led worship by singing while masked. Other choir members have supported this ministry through rayer and encouragement. Thank you, one and all.

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FROM THE MUSIC DESK

by Randy Day, Music Ministry Director

Lastly, one of the favorite hymn texts I love singing during Epiphany (although not categorized in [The Hymnal 1982](#) as such) can be found below. If for any reason this pairing of text and tune is not familiar, I encourage you to search for it on Youtube. Do you have a copy of [The Hymnal 1982](#) at home? Check out hymn #490. The lyrics include ‘light,’ ‘brightness,’ ‘stars,’ ‘shine,’ ‘no darkness,’ and the keystone reference of The Lamb, our Savior, as the ‘light of the city of God.’ The final line is a prayer to be spoken by any person of any age, a gentle plea to God, inviting God to ‘shine in [our hearts], Lord Jesus.’”

Verse 1: *I want to walk as a child of the light.
I want to follow Jesus.
God set the stars to give light to the world.
The star of my life is Jesus.*

Refrain: *In him there is no darkness at all.
The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.*



HEALING PRAYER BOX

by Pam Nugent

Ever since the Covid restrictions have prevented the Healing Prayer Team from anointing and laying hands on people who come for prayer on the first and third Sundays, we have tried to imagine in what ways we can continue to serve the needs of people who would like healing prayer for themselves or others. Of course, other opportunities for healing are offered in other ways at St. Paul's—the Eucharist itself, the Thursday service, the Lay Pastoral Visitors Ministry, and the Intercessory Prayer Ministry. The Lay Pastoral Visitors Ministry in particular shares the needs of parishioners they serve with us so we can pray as well. But we wondered what else we could do.

In imagining what else we could do, we came up with the idea of a Healing Prayer Box, which is now on a table in the vestibule. Paper and a writing implement are there as well for your convenience. If you are at in-person worship on Sunday or at the church anytime during the week and desire healing prayer, just write your request on a sheet of paper, fold it, and drop it through the slot on the top of the box. A member of our team will check the box each Sunday after the service and share the contents with our members.

Pam Nugent





BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

January

Happy Birthday

Anne Brautigam 1/3
 Susan Burroughs 1/19
 Margaret Dodson 1/28
 Mike Golek 1/21
 Eugene Grindle 1/25
 David Guerette 1/21
 Lynn Johnson 1/17
 Ryan Keating 1/18
 Elizabeth Levine 1/19
 Susan Martens 1/20
 Chris Martin 1/21
 Michael McCormick 1/22
 Buddy Moore 1/23
 Morgan Moore 1/24
 Sebastian Mull 1/25
 Jean Mulligan 1/26
 Ben Olsen 1/27
 Brandon Perry 1/28
 Olivia Rivera 1/29
 Jackson Ruprecht 1/30
 John Sappington 1/31



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Articles may be emailed to stpauls@stpaulsmaine.org



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

February

Happy Birthday

Shirley Arnold 02/01

Carol Bondy 02/12

Joanna Brown 02/13

Jessica Bull 02/27

Stephen Chandler 02/05

Burleigh Desjardins 02/01

Carolyn Farr 02/28

Phil Gilliam Cuffee 02/03

Liz Glover 02/02

Karin Jackson 02/27

Thomas Kelley 02/28

Ada Moore 02/15

Helen Nicita 02/21

William Nicita 02/18

Sue Nickerson 02/21

Thomas Nugent 02/02

Lauren Perry 02/11

Charles Priest 02/07

Nicole Severance 02/13

Anne Springer 02/15

Eleanor Steele 02/19

Percival Stoddard 02/26

Ellis Taylor 02/12

Dan Warren 02/04

Kevin Wilson 02/11

Tucker Wnek 02/11

Heather Woodhams 02/08

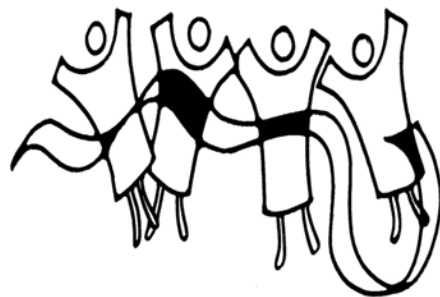
Happy Anniversary

Patricia & Thomas McCabe 02/18

Alfred & Bronda Niese 02/05

James & Nina Rochette 02/14

Allen & Ellen Shraver 02/01



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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

Jan DeBlieu, Junior Warden

Randy Day, Music Ministry Director & Parish Administrator

Carolyn Farr, Administrative Assistant

Karen Tucker, Communications Administrator

Jane Redlon, Nursery Caregiver

Lynn Johnson, Assistant Nursery Caregiver

Stay in touch!

- Check out our website for more details! 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 to enroll



St. Paul's Episcopal Church
 27 Pleasant St.
 P.O. Box 195
 Brunswick, Maine 04011
 Phone: 207-725-5342
 E-mail: stpauls@stpaulsmaine.org