



# St. Paul's Epistle

*"To know Christ and to make Christ known"*

## FROM THE RECTOR:

Dear Friends in Christ,



As the year 2020 dawned upon us, I had come to two conclusions about my life as a priest of God. First, I realized how incredibly thankful I am for each of you who comprise the body of Christ at St. Paul's. I have felt honored, loved, and respected over the past nine plus years in Smithfield, and am proud of who we are as a faith community. Second, I was beginning to feel as though my time as an active, full-time priest of the Church over the past thirty-one years was coming to a close.

It is with no small degree of sadness that I am announcing my retirement from full-time priesthood, effective September 1, 2020. I chose this date prayerfully and in conversation with both Lorraine and Bishop Sam. My hope is to help St. Paul's move through the beginning phases of reopening this summer and then leave giving the Vestry time to help prepare for the fall stewardship campaign, and to begin working with the Diocese for the next steps in the sacramental and pastoral life of the parish.

To say the sudden outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic has made this decision even more difficult is most certainly an understatement. It has challenged each of us in ways we never expected; and our ability to be community even in that time of physical separation has been inspiring. Needless to say, it has substantially impacted our time over the past three months, and it will have significant impact on the shape of our final months together. My hope is that we will be able to find a creative way to celebrate our ministry together between now and the end of August.

Each of you, as the body of Christ that comprises St. Paul's, members and staff, will always have a special place in my heart. You have taught me much about reconciliation, faithfulness of spirit, and the willingness to journey in faith as a community. Whenever I walk a labyrinth anywhere in this world, I will, with deep thanksgiving, recall my time serving with and among you.

You embody the heart and soul of the living Christ. And I give my deepest thanksgiving for our time together. I wish God's richest blessings upon this faith community, and trust that you will continue to be a beacon of faith and service to Johnston County and our Diocese.

Wishing you each God's peace and the love of Christ,  
Jim+

## FROM THE SR. WARDEN:



If there is one truism I have learned in my life, it is that "change is inevitable." Consider the last several years. Just in my lifetime I have experienced several incidents of upheaval: the assassination of both a president and a spiritual leader, wars, significant social and racial protests, terrorism on our soil, financial meltdowns, and now a pandemic. While we either have, or will recover from each of these upheavals, we will never be quite the same as we were before. We are changed.

The same holds true for relationships. Whether it is a personal or a working association, positive links to others provide much of our inner strength and stability. And when those links are altered, it hurts. Father Jim is more than a rector to many of us. He is also a dear friend that we admire and love. His family, wife and son, are dear to us because they are precious to him. And, while we can understand and fully support his retirement, wishing him the absolute best, he will leave a void that will not be easily filled.

Your St. Paul's Vestry is comprised of strong, caring and capable people. We recognize the task of opening our church building again will take hard work and strong coordination involving our vestry, our congregation and our diocese. And yes, we will be leaning heavily on Father Jim, taking advantage of his guidance and wisdom for as long as he is available to us. When he is no longer available, we will be working through the process of finding another St. Paul's rector. That person will not be Father Jim, but in time, we can both survive and flourish, because we recognize "change is inevitable."

Faithfully,

Joyce Kilpatrick-Jordan, Sr. Warden

*May the generosity of God,  
the love of Jesus Christ,  
and the peace of the Holy Spirit,  
be a blessing to us and to all we meet,  
now and always, amen.*

~ Lifting Women's Voices: Prayer to Change the World, 383

# OUTREACH AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE... AND MORE...

## Outreach and Social Justice Committee

June 2020

**“Volunteers are a work of heart”**



Mission Statement: The Outreach and Social Justice Committee of St. Paul's will identify and share with parish members opportunities to serve as Christ would serve in our community and throughout the world by promoting Christian service, programs and projects. Thank you for making our projects a success!

The Outreach and Social Justice Committee meets four times/year and is led by Diane Every and Debby Jenkins.

Contact information:

[Diane Every](#): 919-934-5080 & [Debby Jenkins](#)

Outreach and Social Justice is continuing to collect funds for FLAG. Also, we continue to Feed the Pig to raise money to purchase a Complete Care Package through Episcopal Relief and Development.

The committee is always looking for ways to serve those in the community in need and welcome new ideas. Please contact one of the members if you know of a need.

## Food Pantry

During the pandemic, we are not receiving Food Pantry items at St. Paul's. That doesn't mean the Food Closet at Centenary United Methodist Church is closed. They are struggling to keep up with the needs created by coronavirus fallout. Please check with Centenary for times that canned goods and other staples can be dropped off (919-934-2333). Another option is to drop bags of canned goods off by the door of the covered entrance to First Presbyterian Church.



Feeding the hungry was one of the greatest challenges Jesus offered. “For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat.” Matthew 25:35

## A Thank You From FLAG

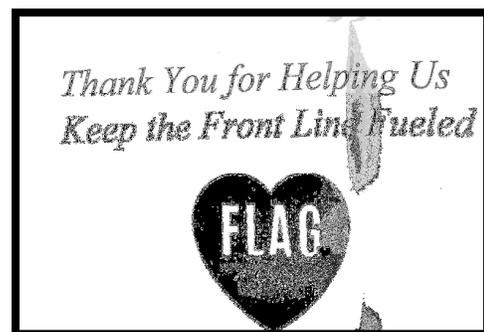
Brotherhood Joins with Outreach & Social Justice



Last month, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew joined Outreach and Social Justice in making a donation to FLAG of Johnston County (Front Line Appreciation Group). This group purchases meals from local restaurants, thereby helping them stay in business, and feeds frontline

workers who are risking their lives during the pandemic. While our particular gift is being used for EMS, Fire, and Police in Smithfield, FLAG also assists healthcare workers of all kinds.

Together our two groups have donated \$1,500.00 to FLAG. Your ongoing support of St. Paul's through your annual pledge and other gifts makes ministry like this possible.



Quarantine and social distancing have not stopped ECW from moving forward on the St. Paul's Cookbook Project. We have been busy

via email, phone, and text to ensure that this 20-year celebration edition, dedicated to Billie Stevens, will be ready for purchase at our December Bake Sale. There will be recipes of some all-time favorites included as well as some very popular dishes from our fundraisers over the last couple of years. We look forward to seeing recipes from any and all who would like to contribute.

To submit a recipe(s) online go to <https://www.typensave.com>. Enter the login: **stpaulsecw** and the password: **pickle213**

To submit a handwritten recipe, please use the enclosed form, then mail to St. Paul's or drop it through the mail slot on the office entry door. Feel free to copy the form for additional submissions.

~ Pat Hovorka, President

## When Will We Get Back to Normal?

In some ways, this continues to be a trick question. It is doubtful we'll get back to pre-pandemic normal for quite some time. We're not sure how the numbers of cases will change over the course of the summer or whether a predicted resurgence will take place in the fall. We may find ourselves in a dance back-and-forth between different stages until as a vaccine is created and fully distributed.

That said, it is quite **possible** that we will be able to return to in-person worship **at reduced numbers** beginning in July. Our Diocese has been working hard, creating a Reopening Committee consisting of our Bishops, a number of clergy (both priests and deacons) and lay leaders (including medical professionals) to come up with a set of stages for reopening.

**Movement between these stages will be based on health markers in the community rather than arbitrary dates on the calendar.** If there's a spike in new cases and deaths as a result of the state's reopening, we will not move forward by July 1. So, it's tentative until it's enacted.

If we can begin in-person worship in July (Stage 2), **the maximum number of people allowed in the nave for worship will be 25** (incl. the Rector, Music Director and acolyte). **Physical distancing of six feet will be required between persons not living in the same household. Masks will be required by all in attendance. Masks are required so that we can protect the most vulnerable among us. And let's face it—a significant majority of our members are in at least one high-risk category.**

We would be able to have up to 25 people in Lawrence Hall (depending on how we can work out distancing) for a simulcast on TV. **Outdoor worship** is possible in Stage 2: up to 35 people allowed at each outdoor service. Since July is one of our hottest months and also subject to storms, we'd have to consider outdoor worship carefully.

Communion may be allowed in Stage 2. The Diocese and our reopening subcommittee (see Vestry Highlights at right) will consider safe ways to administer the bread in Holy Communion without violating mask integrity on the part of the celebrant or congregation. Again, the safety and well-being of our members is our highest priority.

Our subcommittee has changed since the Vestry meeting. Sheila Stafford has dropped off. Curtis Brookshire and Mike Weathers have been added. Our Vestry hopes to have a blueprint for reopening in place by mid-June for fine-tuning at our June meeting.

Keep the faith! Jim+

## May Vestry Highlights

Vestry Meeting actions and updates for May:

- ◆ The Vestry received notice of the Rector's retirement effective September 1.
- ◆ Received the Finance Committee report through the end of April. Pledges are about \$3,000 under budget for the month of April and \$8,500 below budget for the year. Unpledged income is slightly below budget for the year. Total income is down \$10,000 for the year. Expenses are slightly under budget for the month and \$5,000 below budget for the year. As a result, we are slightly over \$5,000 net below budget for the year.
- ◆ Received a financial update for the month of May through May 26. Pledges are currently \$6,000 below budget for May.
- ◆ The Finance Committee placed an announcement in the weekly bulletin advising the congregation of the current shortfall in pledged income and requested people catch up as they are able.
- ◆ We will continue worshipping online through at least the end of June. There is a possibility we can have in-person worship at reduced numbers beginning in July (see article to the left).
- ◆ A Subcommittee of Joyce Kilpatrick-Jordan, Tom Stevens, and Sheila Stafford (with the Rector as ex-officio and the possible addition of one or two others) will meet to develop a blueprint for reopening St. Paul's. The Subcommittee has a checklist developed by clergy and lay leaders of the Diocese. Each church in the Diocese will use this checklist to prepare for reopening.
- ◆ One member has received several inquiries about why St. Paul's has not been holding in-person worship. **This is not a St. Paul's decision.** It is a Diocesan decision for all worshipping groups in the Diocese—and a decision made by all Dioceses across the country as a way of protecting the health and well-being of our members. **The Rector and Vestry support fully the actions of The Episcopal Church to safeguard its members.**

## Attendance and Pledge Obligations 2020

Last Week 5/24/20		Year to Date	
		1/1/2020 –5/27/20	
Pledge Payments	\$2975.00	Pl. Payments	\$ 91,663.00
Weekly Pledge Target	\$4971.15	Pledge Budget	\$104,394.15

## Sunday Worship Through June 28

Our Zoom link for Sunday-morning worship will be posted in our weekly email blast and bulletin. We will not post the link outside parish news due to recent problems with hackers.

Our Facebook link is the home page for the St. Paul's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/St-Pauls-Episcopal-Church-Smithfield-NC-130758673995/> Note: one need not subscribe to Facebook to watch the livestream. Simply choose "not now" if asked about adding an account.

See our regular Thursday email blast for the Zoom link used for our Saturday-morning Zoom Coffee Hours.



## Coffee Hour Changes in June

At its May meeting, the Vestry suggested moving to a bi-monthly Coffee Hour in June since more people are getting out on occasion and seeing one another at safe distances.

**Our Online Coffee Hour will continue on Saturdays in June on June 13 and 27 at 11:00 am.** If you miss seeing some of your parish family, please consider joining us for an hour of no-agenda conversation and laughs on those Saturday mornings. Zoom links will be posted in the email blast and bulletin the week of each Coffee Hour.

## Stay On Top of the Process!

If you would like to see up-to-date information from the Diocese regarding reopening plans, visit the Diocesan website: <https://www.episdionc.org/coronavirus/>

Another way to stay on top of Diocesan news is to subscribe to Please Note—a weekly Diocesan email:

<https://www.episdionc.org/please-note/>

## St. Paul's Episcopal Church



### Sunday Schedule

Through at least Sunday, June 28:

**11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist online**

## Upcoming Dates to Remember

- May 30 Coffee Hour, 11:00 am (online)
- May 31 Feast of Pentecost (online)**
- Jun 1-7 Office Manager on vacation
- Jun 03 Wednesday Bible Study, 11:00 am (online)
- Jun 10 Wednesday Bible Study, 11:00 am (online)
- Jun 13 Coffee Hour, 11:00 am (online)
- Jun 15-21 Rector on vacation
- Jun 16 Finance, 6:00 pm (online)
- Jun 17 **No Bible Study this week**
- Jun 23 Vestry, 7:00 pm (online)
- Jun 24 Wednesday Bible Study, 11:00 am (online)
- Jun 27 Coffee Hour, 11:00 am (online)