

April 2020
Volume LX

THE EPISTLE

**PALM SUNDAY
5 APRIL 2020**

WHAT IF EVERYONE ON SUNDAY MORNING, PUTS A BRANCH ON THE DOOR OF THEIR HOUSE OR ON THE WINDOW, TO CELEBRATE PALM SUNDAY?

IT COULD BE ANY GREEN BRANCH YOU CAN GET. THIS WOULD HELP, DESPITE THE SOCIAL DISTANCING, TO BE CONNECTED AS WE ENTER INTO THE HOLIEST OF WEEKS.

WANT TO JOIN?

WE MAY BE PHYSICALLY ISOLATED, BUT NOT SEPARATED. WE ARE UNITED AS THE BODY OF CHRIST.

WE ARE THE CHURCH



HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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| Sunday, April 5th | Palm Sunday -10:30 am Facebook Live Worship |
| Wednesday , April 8th | Stations of the Cross -8 pm Facebook Live |
| Thursday, April 9th | Maundy Thursday- 6 pm Zoom Agape Dinner & Foot/Hand Washing 8pm Facebook Live Stripping of the Home Altar |
| Friday, April 10th | Good Friday - 7 pm Facebook Live Worship |
| Saturday, April 11th | Holy Saturday - TBD Virtual Diocesan Great Vigil of Easter to which we are contributing some leadership |
| Sunday, April 12th | Easter Day - 11:15 am Join in a live broadcast from the National Cathedral of an Easter Festal Eucharist. |

*Please continue to check the St. Paul's Facebook page for updates and links to services. <https://www.facebook.com/stpauljxmi/>

Rector's Corner

Beloved in Christ,

My fervent prayer is that this edition of the epistle finds you healthy, safe and at home. When we were forced some weeks ago to close in person worship on Sundays to our congregation, and later to close the office entirely, I immediately began to think what another Rector would do in this situation. I am a

student of History. Mostly American history, and especially the history of our Civil and World Wars. Sandwiched there in the middle of this timeline is the great flu pandemic of 1918. Since our Parish history goes back 180+ years, I asked Janet Wesch to point me to places in the archives where I could find records of this point in history. I find 100 years ago a Rector by the name of Mr. Poole. He was a fairly young new Rector, round of face and stature and a good-natured fellow and friend of all. I immediately liked him! 100 years ago seems not so long ago as I read through the then brand new St. Paul's Messenger newsletter penned by the Rev. Mr. W.H. Poole.

From the Nov. 25th, 1917 sermon by Mr. Poole entitled "Truth As Facts":

"The world is rife with rumors. They seem to spring up overnight. The papers are full of them. They are born in jest and by word. They grow rapidly as they are passed along. They are causing disquiet and alarm in many quarters and especially among the credulous. It is very important that we should find out the truth if it is possible to do so and contradict false rumors before they get away on their tours of destruction. A rumor has been going around that two men were found poisoning the wells at Camp Custer and that they were compelled to dig their own graves in which they were buried after they had been shot. Investigation does not verify this rumor.

And there is another danger. Americans of German parentage and Americans born in Germany are being watched with suspicion. There have been cases where action has been taken against them on the merest hearsay evidence. They have not been given a chance to face their accusers. They have not been granted the fundamental rights of every criminal. In their patriotic enthusiasm, some Americans have forgotten to exercise the righteous justice for which we are supposed to be fighting. We must beware lest we discourage Americans of German parentage and birth from being loyal citizens of the United States."

In reading on the history of the flu pandemic in Michigan, I believe Mr. Poole writes about the first stirrings of a devastating outbreak of flu at Camp Custer near Battle Creek. The main outbreak comes later in 1918 but this early "rumor" coincides with early outbreaks around the country of "Lagrippe", pneumonia and other conditions mistakenly blamed for early sicknesses and deaths.

Mr. Poole also calls out the scapegoating and persecution of German-American citizens which was rampant and vicious during the war years. When America entered the war the floodgates were opened on the kind of "patriotic" prejudice we see today against Americans of Asian decent amid our current crisis.

How I wish we could say we've evolved! It seems the virus is the only thing that is good at evolving. We still battle our own sinful natures and the panic that strikes us when we feel helpless and vulnerable. When I first came to St. Paul's I began to teach you about vulnerability as it relates to courage through the work of Brene Brown. Having been taught by her and knowing the value of her work, I knew this would help us learn what healthy relationships look like in our church, in our families and with ourselves. If you haven't read her book *Daring Greatly* now is the time! If you have read it then read it again! I've shared a recent interview she did on 60 Minutes and it is balm for my soul right now. If you go online please find it and watch it.

Rector's Corner Continued...

I will continue perusing the parish archives of 100 years ago and reporting to you what I find there. It's comforting to me to hear those voices echoing their experiences and knowing that what we survived then, while going through a World War, we can survive now.

Your Vestry and I will continue to reach out by phone, email and snail mail and we ask that you do the same with us. Let us know what you need, let us know if you or someone you love is sick so we can pray together. Later in this newsletter I'll be outlining our Holy Week liturgies which will be done in our own homes and in solidarity with one another as St. Paul's members. You will receive a Holy Week packet either via email or snail mail with the liturgies, readings and suggested activities. My prayer is that you join in as you can and unite yourself with all of us in marking these holy days. My great thanks goes out to Alice, our secretary, who is working from home and keeping our communications together. She is a treasure.

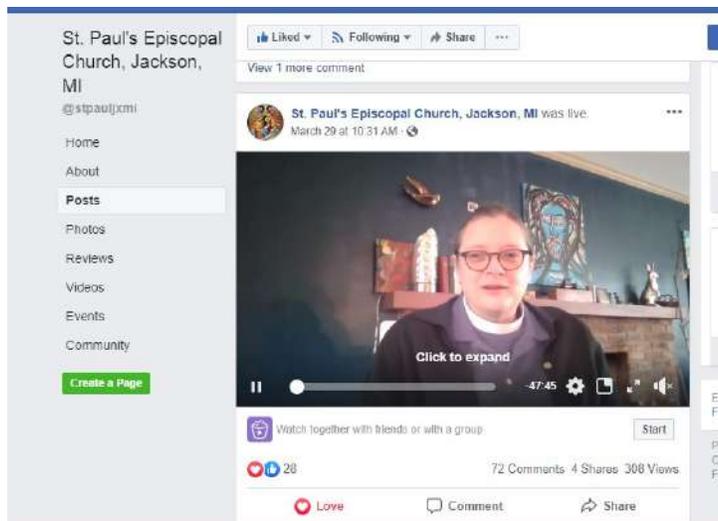
"Fear not." Is one of the most repeated verses in the Bible with good reason, especially these days. It's less of a commandment not to fear as a reminder of whom to trust in when we do fear. The words "fear not" are always followed by the goodness of God who loves us and is with us always. May God bless you and keep you, may God make God's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you." May God lift the light of His countenance upon you and give you peace."

Faithfully,

Sarah+

Join us during Holy week for livestream worship. Follow the link: <https://www.facebook.com/stpauljxmi/>

You do not have to have a Facebook account to watch the videos!



From our Sr. Warden...

Sr. Warden Report:

You might say I'm feeling it. More mentally than physically, I suppose. As an introvert, these life-style changes being placed on us are not difficult, even welcome to a certain extent. As I get older, big crowds, loud noises and seemingly endless gatherings wear me down. I find it necessary to retreat to my quiet place in order to regenerate. You could say that social distancing is my jam.

So, I will admit that the ask of Sarah to call on our parishioners was met with dread and fear. You mean, I am going to have to call and speak to people? People I don't always talk to? People I don't even know well? Ugh!

"Ok", I tell myself. "Michelle, put your big girl pants on and just get it done." *Have I mentioned how much I HATE the phone?*

Call #1..."whew, that wasn't so bad. They were grateful that I made the effort to reach out".

Call #2..."answering machine, thank you God?"

Call #3..."it's Zoe...I got this!"...

Fast forward...

Last call...serious anxiety...I can't mess this one up. He is someone so special to this parish. He hasn't been able to attend church for a while now. Will he even know me...does it even matter? Just dial, he probably won't even answer.

(Holy Spirit descending upon me)...what ensues next is no doubt an incredible blessing and one that I needed more than I knew. We conversed, he shared the most sincere and special memories of his recent experience at St. Paul's with me. His mind was sharp and he spoke with the slightest hint of loneliness. He needed to be heard and a simple phone call allowed us to connect. Words cannot explain how this moved me.

I think back to our vestry retreat and the exercises in connecting with people one on one. I cannot deny that this hit that message home. I recognize the power of connecting with people. It is important that we all take this message to heart and make those connections. Love your neighbor and now more than ever, care for you neighbor. I now recognize that this is a critical ministry for me. It's not easy to reach out, but it is incredibly rewarding.

In this time of extreme stress for us and for our country, I seek out these words to comfort me...

Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

~Matthew 11:28

*Shalom,
Michelle*



From our Jr. Warden...

Coronavirus, COVID 19, is there much else on everyone's minds these days? This is such an unprecedented time in our lives. School closings were enough of a jolt to our lives, but every day something else is closed and we are forced more and more to stay isolated and in doors. We are all taking these precautions for the betterment of all. Many of us will not be affected by the virus, or if we do contract it, will not become overly ill. But, we all need to do our part to stop the spread of the virus. It is very dangerous to the elderly and anyone with an existing illness or compromised immune system. We all need to play our part and help prevent the spread of the virus. While we are spending more time at home, it is a good time to reflect on our own lives and where we stand with God and our community. What can we do to help our neighbors and ourselves? Please check with your neighbors and friends and make sure they are healthy and have the basic necessities. God will watch over us and help us through this crisis.

-Debbie Batchelder

Jr. Warden



My quarantine project. I always make home made Christmas ornaments for all of my children and grandchildren. These are the ones in progress right now.

Building & Grounds



The B& G Committee met March 11, 2020 at 5:30 PM. Present were Loren Swanson, Nathan Randall, Harry Strait, Wayne Frey, Kyle King.

Items Discussed: Spring Cleaning outside. Remove and replace light bulbs with LED bulbs in office hallways. Glass Narthex door not locking always. Icemaker in kitchen not working. Hang new sanitizers throughout church. Concerns were addressed with the railing being loose going up the steps to the Altar area. The door at the Glass Narthex was repaired next day.

The loose railing was repaired temporarily, icemaker was addressed with outside repair person. Other items requiring people to be on the property are on hold until our Bishop deems it is safe for us to return to the facility completing any other B&G concerns.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:35 PM

Finance Committee:

Our treasurer, Marco Shehab, received communication from our financial partner Comerica who manages our Endowment. On March 24, 2020 it was expressed to us our market investments were adjusted for the recent down turn in the market. The adjustment is a moving one considering the volatility. The consensus of the Committee is to stay the course, trusting the conservative nature of the fire walls established in our directives to Comerica. If there are questions please contact myself or Marco Shehab.

We are in trying times, nothing like we've seen before. Our Faith in our God, and each other can prevail!

Yours in Christ,

Kyle King

Chairperson, Buildings & Grounds

Member, Finance Committee

Mission & Outreach



The "Handbags of Love" Luncheon and Fundraiser has been postponed until **September 19, 2020**. We are still collecting purses in the meantime though! If you find a good deal online for a new designer handbag, please keep this worthy cause in mind. For more info or questions, please call Barb Markowski at 517-206-0064

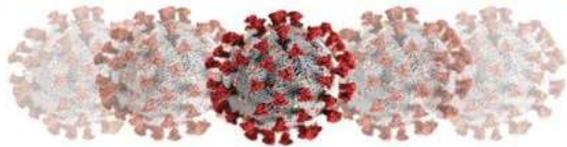
We will be collecting items for the Jackson High Community Closet for students who need special help with personal items, clothing, food etc. as soon as we are able to come together again.



LEND A HELPING HAND WITH

JCAN

JACKSON COVID-19 ACTION NETWORK



To **DONATE FUNDS** visit the United Way website:
uwjackson.org

For **MORE INFORMATION** about JCAN visit:
cityofjackson.org/coronavirus

DONATE SUPPLIES

Baby formula
Baby wipes
Diapers & pull-ups
Tampons & pads
Hand sanitizer
Toilet paper
Sanitizer wipes
Toiletries
Over the counter meds
Laundry soap
Bleach

DONATION SITES

YMCA

127 W. Wesley St.
Assisted drop off
east side of building:
Mon-Fri 11 am-1 pm
Unassisted drop off
west side of building:
Mon-Fri 9 am-5 pm

BOOS CENTER

210 Gilbert St.
Mon-Fri 12 pm - 7 pm
Sat 10 am - 12 pm

If you or someone you know needs help:

CALL 2-1-1

If you'd like to volunteer with JCAN:

CALL 2-1-1



“Everyday Minister”

With

Melissa our Seminarian

Being an Everyday Minister in the Life and Times of COVID-19

This month I would like to highlight the Vestry, as well as Alice and Pastor Sarah, as Everyday Ministers. As a reminder, an everyday minister is how we take our Christian ministry out into the world, by practicing what we talk about through St. Paul’s.

Our world is changing every day but one thing we do know is that the impacts of COVID-19 is something we will be dealing with in the days and weeks to come. The difficulty becomes how to be an Everyday Minister while facing the challenges of isolation and social distancing.

The reason I chose the Vestry, Alice, and Pastor Sarah to highlight as Everyday Ministers is that they have taken it upon themselves to reach out by phone to individuals and families in our St. Paul’s community each week while we are unable to meet in person. Your family should have received a call to touch base. If your family did not receive a call, please let our office know. We may need your updated contact information.

In the meantime we all can have a ripple effect on reaching out to others we know who may be feeling alone, scared, isolated, or just bored. Check-in questions you can ask others during social isolation times are below.

- What are you grateful for today?
- Who are you connecting with today?
- What expectations of normal are you letting go of today?
- How are you moving your body today?
- How are you getting outside today?
- What beauty are you creating, cultivating, or inviting today?

I will leave you with a prayer *For the Parish* from page 817 in the Book of Common Prayer:

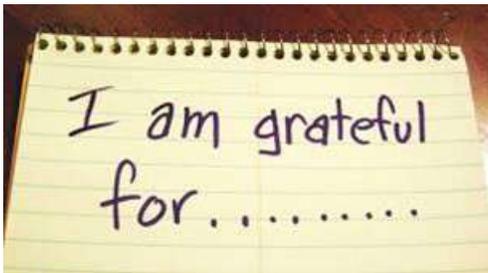
“Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**”



I'm Grateful For....

*By Seminarian Melissa Congleton
and*

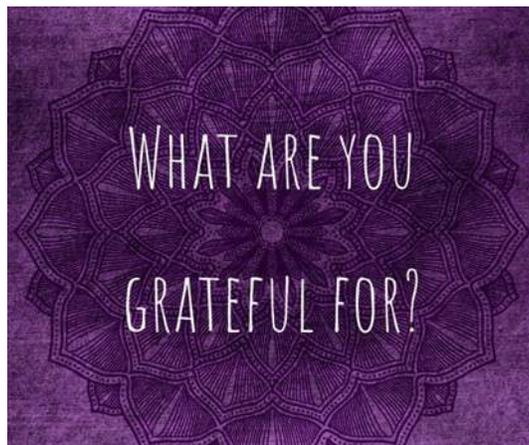
the St. Paul's Youth Group



The youth group has not been left behind...it has taken to meeting on Zoom! In the times of COVID-19 the group agreed it was appropriate to share things they were grateful for with the greater St. Paul's community.

- Pastor Sarah is thankful for their dalmatians Jack and Chip (they were keeping her company during our last meeting), and for their bunny Steven who was sleeping during our Zoom meeting!
- Seminarian Melissa is grateful for being able to meet on Zoom with the youth group and her retired racing greyhounds Daphne and Quincy as well as her yellow lab, Chica.
- Melaina is grateful for being able to go outside safely and having more time to take in what is around us instead of being self-consumed.
- Samuel is grateful for people helping others and not just leaving them in the dark with no help. He is appreciative of those who are going outside helping the elderly and others by doing things like bringing them groceries. Samuel is also thankful for his dog Eilidh!
- Henry is thankful for the families that we all have, that no one has been diagnosed yet with the illness that he knows, being able to go outdoors, the Lord, food, being alive, and for the ability to not take things for granted.

Now it's your turn. What are you grateful for?



The Women of St. Paul's Episcopal Church ECW

How the world has changed since our last Epistle article. Then we were looking forward to our Lenten retreat and St. Patrick's Day festivities. Today we are all in survival mode and praying we can get through this pandemic unscathed.

Out of an abundance of caution we cancelled the Lenten retreat. We are also cancelling the April and May meetings and we will consider June as the crisis evolves. As you all have probably seen this situation is fluid and we must ride the wave where it takes us.

We hope you are staying in and staying safe. We are all aware that not all heroes wear capes. Some wear masks and gloves and are fighting on the front lines. Some of those are right here at St. Paul's and we pray every day that God will send his angels to protect them as they fight to keep us all safe. There are definitely angels among us and not all of them have wings. Some have shopping carts and cars and shop for those who are most at risk and then deliver the goods to the doors of people they don't know and also those they do. Some sew masks and are willing to share them at no cost to help protect the vulnerable. Some fill our on-line orders. Some deliver those orders to our doors. These days the list of angels is endless and we are blessed because of them. We all benefit from the heroes and a lot of us have benefited from the angels. I know we have and I pray that you all have an angel to call on.

If not there is a locally owned meat store that will take orders over the phone and bring the order right to your car with zero exposure to people. If you're looking for things to keep you busy there's a locally owned downtown store that will take orders for puzzles and such and deliver them to your car again with zero exposure. We had a delivery of salt today for our softener with zero exposure. Perhaps you have tips for people who aren't able to get out and don't have access to shoppers? If so let us know and we will find a way to share that information with everyone. We are all in this together and need to help as much as we can and share any and all information that will make someone's life easier and keep them safe.

So what are you doing to stay busy and keep your mind off things in these surreal times? I'm getting a lot of cross stitching time guilt free! I'm also reading a book each morning called Everyday Gratitude because even in the midst of this craziness there is always something to be thankful for – we're safe, our family and friends are safe, we're still breathing and every morning we wake up on the right side of the dirt. So blessed.

Take care of yourselves. Take care of each other. Pray for each other. Break the chain of infection. Stay inside. Stay safe. Stay healthy. Keep your distance. Reach out to others by phone, text, snail mail, e-mail, Face Time, Zoom any way that's available to you. Call your neighbors and do a drive-by greeting from the safety of your car. Have a face to face conversation with them from a safe distance. We can do this and with God's help we can survive it. And remember -WASH YOUR HANDS!

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Rowley, Vice President, ECW



| | |
|------------------|----------|
| Jon Gould | April 6 |
| Janet Wesch | April 7 |
| Xavier Radabaugh | April 12 |
| Christy Randall | April 15 |
| Steve Baldwin | April 20 |
| Diana Sinclair | April 20 |
| Cassie Meyer | April 23 |
| David VanLoo | April 26 |
| Ron Rowley | April 30 |
| Katie Mulhearn | April 30 |
| Alarik Brethauer | April 30 |

Congratulations
Janet Hughes on the
birth of your beautiful
granddaughter!



One Week Old

We asked our St. Paul's family to let us know what they are doing during their time at home and got lots of wonderful feedback! We would like to continue to highlight this in future issues, so keep it coming! We especially want to see your pictures from Palm Sunday and Holy week.

Sally McKinnon from California: "I have been on lock down since March 16th, and our governor says we will remain that way until April 19th. I have plenty of food and activities thus far. I get out and walk, etc. When I sit on my patio, I can see a neighbor, across the fairway, sitting on her patio. Perfect! - Daily I receive an inspirational scripture based message, from my church here, St. Margaret's Episcopal. Like everything else, the church and her services are all shut down. Only the Neighbor to Neighbor activity continues at the church. That is a program serving those in need with food, clothing and money if necessary. 650 families were served this past Tuesday. Hope to see all at St. Paul's in May. Fingers crossed."

Christy & Nathan Randall: Adventuring outside after last weekend's rainy day with Kayla and Macrae.



Lynn Eckerle: "I've been keeping up with my exercises, doing some much need painting in the house, cooking and hanging out with my sweet kitty, Lucy. Also been reading in the afternoon, getting outside for some yard work and early gardening. And of course the occasional nap! I am finding God in the dawn of each new day. I feel closest to "her" when I am out in her creation. This morning was warm enough for that first cup of coffee on the patio, in the fog watching the day break - awesome! Here are some fun photos. Take care and stay well everyone."



Carrie Heider-Grant: We've been busy! Baking sourdough, making pancakes, delivering milk to young families, chalk-bombing our friends' sidewalks, and snuggling with our pets.





Suzi Howe: "My husband and I are reorganizing closets, well I am. He is busy cooking up all manner of delicious soups, which are our 'go

to' for lunch. Our kitty is just chilling at home wondering why we are invading her domain on a daily basis. I miss everyone, but am so grateful for the technology that allows Rev. Sarah to connect us spiritually. I am looking forward to the day we can all join together in celebration."



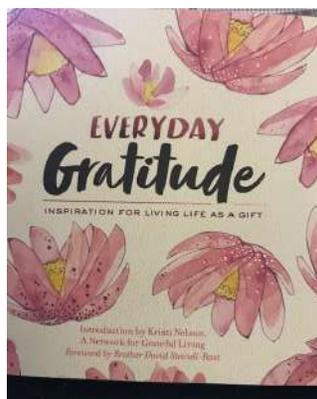
Heidi Hosler-Lathrop: Here is Joe's home office setup for Covid-19, complete with napping cat. And the collage shows some of how we've been spending our time. The drive-through food pantry is twice a month currently, we anticipate it will get busier as the business closures continue. Much love to our St Paul's Church family!



Marilyn Meadowcroft: "This past Christmas I was gifted a copy of *The One Year UNCOMMON LIFE Daily Challenge* devotional written by Tony Dungy and Nathan Whitaker. The readings are designated by month/date but not year, and focuses on seven themes: Core; Family, Friends, Potential, Mission, Influence and Faith with each theme repeating every seven days. Each devotion includes Scripture and an Uncommon Key – an application or action to implement based on what you have just read. I have so enjoyed reading the devotion each day and thinking about how it might apply to me and my daily life. After reading the scripture each day and the author's comments I will often reach for the Bible and read more of the scripture. "

John & Jo Alipit: "We do our prayers and the Great Litany. Jo continues reading the Bible and answering the questions for their Community Bible Studies. Watch Online Church Services. Tread Mill exercises. Crossword puzzles for John. Watch TV. Walk. Played Golf."

Valerie Rowley: "Cross stitch projects are what I'm working on and this is the book that I read each morning. "



Prayer for a Pandemic
 May we who are merely inconvenienced
 Remember those whose lives are at stake
 May we who have no risk factors
 Remember those most vulnerable
 May we who have the luxury of working from home
 Remember those who must choose
 Between their health and making the rent
 May we have flexibility to care for our children
 When the schools close
 Remember those who have no options
 May we who have to cancel our trips
 Remember those who have no place to go
 May we who are losing our margin money
 In the turmoil of the economic market
 Remember those who have no margin at all
 May we who settle in for quarantine at home
 Remember those who have no home
 As fear grips our country
 Let us choose love
 During this time when we cannot physically
 Wrap our arms around each other,
 Let us find ways to be the
 loving embrace of God to our Neighbor
 Amen

Cameron Bellm



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