

January
2021
Volume
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THE EPISTLE

St. Paul's
Episcopal Church
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Jackson, Michigan 49201
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*You crown the year
with your goodness
and your paths drip
with abundance.*

Psalm 65:11

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Rector's Corner



Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."— John 8:12

Friends,

This Epiphanytide we will follow an old custom of asking God's blessings on our homes and all who dwell there. "Chalking the door" on Epiphany is a visible sign to those around us who care that we are asking God's blessings upon our homes and families. For 2021 the writing above our doors will be 20+C+M+B+21. In between the four numerals of our year are sandwiched the initials of the names tradition has given to the Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar. Others think these initials are the first letters of the Latin phrase "Christus Mansionem Benedicat," which means "May Christ bless this dwelling". If you've never done this before I recommend you try it this year. Even if you don't feel blessed right now, chalking your door will at least give you some opportunities to speak with neighbors, friends and even delivery people about your faith.

We think about renewal and hope during the New Year. Lamentation and sorrow over our losses and suffering are right and we let go of what has been so our hands are free to hold what God has in store for us this year. New encounters with people, places and things are joined, we pray, by new encounters of our Holy God. As our days grow longer, we pray for the Light of Life to be present in our lives giving us hope and courage. We pray also for this Light to shine through us to others. Trying to do good in our lives and bless others by our own strength leads to burn out and resentment. Pairing the commandment to love our neighbor as we love ourselves with the commandment to love God above all else is the only way we can truly keep both these commandments. In order to bless others, we must recognize and receive the light of Christ in our lives and God's love in our hearts.

I've never been one for New Year's Resolutions. They're usually a set up for failure. What I pray each New Year is that God will show me during Epiphany, the areas of my life where there are blocks to receiving God's love and showing that love to others. My own sinful attitudes and actions and my tendency to rely on my own prideful strength are what get me in trouble each year. I ask God to show me these places where I've stopped the flow of God's love in and through me. If I'm listening, I'll know just what to pray for and allow God to work on during Lent. I ask your prayers for my enlightenment this Epiphany and I will be praying for yours as well.

We will gather on Sunday the 24th for our Annual Meeting. You'll be mailed an info packet with the budget and candidates for Vestry and delegates for Diocesan Convention prior to the meeting. Reporting will be light, and our "voting" will take place online and via phone. More details will come on how this will all take place and thank you for your continued support of St. Paul's.

Faithfully,
Sarah+

Curate's Report



"The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it." -John 1:5

I am corresponding to you for the first time as Reverend Deacon. As you know my ordination to the transitional diaconate took place on December 12 at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Detroit. This was a very bright spot in the Advent time of waiting. I regret that we all couldn't gather for the occasion but know that Pastor Sarah was there representing the good people of St. Paul's.

As we waited through Advent, our parish community moved toward the light in what seemed like a dim time. Pandemic life seems stagnant in so many ways yet we are still moving forward. We are celebrating Jesus being born and moving into Epiphany. And we are celebrate the Incarnation of Jesus in the world, for the world. This incarnation gives us the gift of hope, something that is perhaps much more needed this year with the vaccination process in its early stages. We all hope for a safe vaccine that is able to be effective, without negative side effects, and distributed to all in a timely manner. But to dig deeper, our Christianity places our enduring hope in God.

Since we have celebrated Jesus' birth it is now up to us to make this hope manifest as we move into 2021. We each bring our own light into the world to make this God-given light shine even brighter. With this, our children and youth worked on a project to send cards to the homes of some of our less connected parish members since pandemic Advent has called for additional creativity. And to make the Epiphany a memorable one, our families with children are putting together a virtual Epiphany pageant by submitting original clips of reenacted scenes from the bible for compilation. This along with Pastor Sarah's Advent Art series and window art series are helping us to move to the light in more creative and different ways than in the past. For our children, they are celebrated with a Zoom Christmas party and the Confirmation group had a special session with their mentors.

As we look toward 2021 we move to the light together, with each other, with God at our side, to cancel out the darkness.

Yours in light & hope,

Deacon Melissa



From our Sr. Warden...

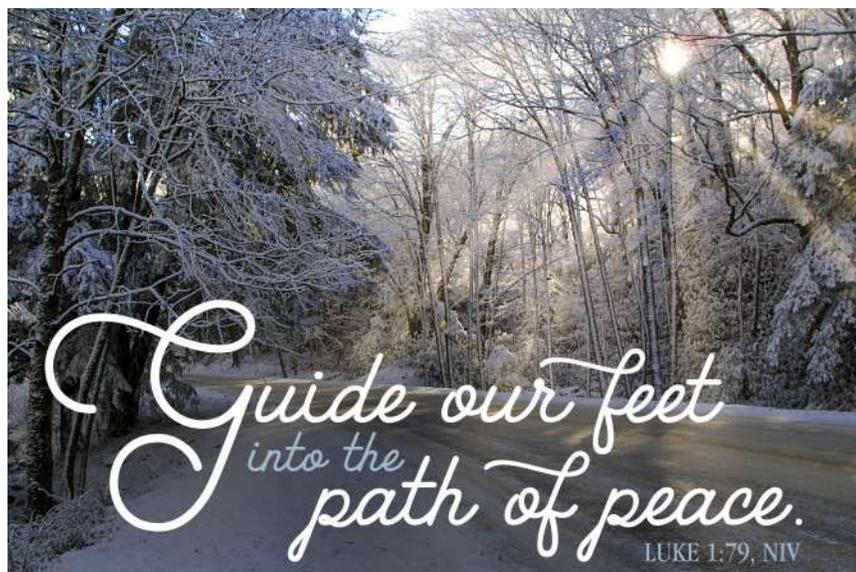
The budget committee met earlier this week to begin finalizing the 2021 budget. While the numbers look good, we still hope to get more pledges coming in. We did not take any withdrawal on the endowment this year and overall, numbers are looking very good as Marco has and will continue to share. Please keep the committee in your prayers as we continue to work towards a budget that meets the needs of our parish, staff and community.

As Debbie mentioned in her report, we had a Zoom meeting with Bishop Perry. We had a decent turnout with several parishioners letting me know they watched the recording. Several people shared their stories and I'm so very proud of our clergy, staff and members. We are truly a loving community in Christ.

Congratulations Deacon Melissa. For those who were unable to catch the service, please take the time to watch. You can see the service on the St. Paul's Facebook page. Melissa, we are so proud of you and continue to be honored and blessed that you are here with us.

For me, personally, it has been a whirlwind of a month. I am thrilled to be starting a new job, tired and out of shape but feeling so very grateful to be employed. I take pause to count my blessings, practice gratitude and pray for all those who are scared, in pain and feeling alone. Hoping that this season of hope and good news touches everyone in some meaningful way. Happy New Year and may the peace of the Lord be with you all.

Shalom,
Michelle



From our Jr. Warden...

As December marches into January, I have taken some time to reflect on the past year. It has certainly been a tumultuous year, with COVID 19 and all the new restrictions and changes in our lifestyles. And let us not forget the contested election. God has given us many new challenges and the opportunity to look beyond ourselves and dwell in the bigger picture. We were forced out of our complacent lives and the small world we live in and thrown headfirst into a world crisis that affects all of us, not just our immediate family and friends. The upheaval has been difficult for many people and has caused great hardship, but it has also focused our attention inward to our family and how much we love them and cherish them, even, or maybe more so, since we cannot be together. While we are looking inwards, we have also been forced to look at the big picture worldwide and the effects this virus is having on everyone. It is time we start thinking about the greater good for all, accept the new lifestyle and restrictions, pray for the vaccine to be effective and that enough people will get the vaccine to end this pandemic.

On a lighter note, we had a wonderful zoom meeting with Bishop Perry this week. The Diocese chose well when they elected Bishop Perry to lead us into the next era. She is warm, inviting, and full of energy. And she has exciting plans for the future. We are lucky to have her as our spiritual guide.

Wishing you all a very Happy New Year, and pray for peace and tranquility in 2021.

Faithfully,

Debbie Batchelder



Mission & Outreach

Dear friends and fellow servants,

During pandemic we had some extraordinary opportunities to serve our neighbors in need. Before pandemic we tied, prayed over and distributed fleece blankets to the Interfaith and Aware Shelters. Though we did not meet in our building as we usually do after February, we helped in various ways through our funds and staff. In 2020 M&O's Camp Foundation grant money was used to:

- Fund meals for the temporary homeless shelter with Big Guy Catering providing hot dinners every night for 2 months. We also supported BGC in providing lunches to health care workers and teachers.

- Distribute food from the United Way's Food Sharing program

- Distribute a small grant to Pastor Sarah's Discretionary Fund

- Give end of year grants to the following organizations:

Jackson Interfaith Shelter, The Aware Shelter, Family Services & Children's Aid, Jackson High School Community Closet, Jackson County Health Department Get Real Program, Youth Haven Ranch, SOAR & the Community Action Agency.

Though most of us were not physically involved in providing much of this relief, we supported these efforts with our prayers, support and funds. Thank you so much for your generosity and remember the Church IS at work in the world even as our doors remain closed for the time being.

New Year's Blessings,

Pastor Sarah





Join us each Sunday at 10:30 am for the Facebook Livestream of our service from inside our sanctuary!

<https://www.facebook.com/stpauljxmi>

Sunday Worship Bulletins are on our website at <https://stpauljxmi.org/>

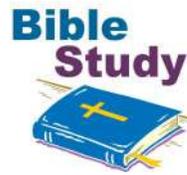
You can also view the service later on Facebook.



Diana Sinclair is faithfully collecting names for our prayer list, so please call

(517-250-9729) or

email her at finnikki96@aol.com to add anyone for whom you'd like the Church to pray. We are so grateful for the prayers of this Church family and join with you in asking God's blessing on those we love and all who are fighting to keep us safe and healthy.



Pastor Sarah's Weekly Zoom Bible Study
Wednesdays at 10am

Follow this link to Zoom in: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83005898502>
No Password required



Join Pastor Sarah each Wednesday at **8pm on Facebook live** <https://www.facebook.com/stpauljxmi> for the service of Compline from the Book of Common Prayer with the commemoration of saints that day.

Adult Forum

Note the new time:
9:00 am-10:00 am on Sundays
via Zoom-

All adults are welcome to join!
For the Zoom meeting link and more info contact:

Eric R. Magnusson,
Email: emagnusson75@gmail.com

Cell: 248-842-1859

Meeting ID: 992 3997 8197

Passcode: Adult Forum

The Women of St. Paul's Episcopal Church

ECW

Happy New Year to each and every one. May the light of Christ and this season touch our hearts and lives during these next few days of the holiday season and every day throughout the New Year. I was so saddened that we were unable to share our usual Christmas luncheon but I hope we are all safe and healthy. We had an excellent reason not to meet. And as they say "this time next year".

Though we have been unable to meet as a group, the ECW board has been active behind the scenes. As you know, we were able to donate to the Community Action Agency to help provide Christmas presents for their Angel Tree to help needy families in the Jackson area. Thank you to all of those who contributed. We were able to give over \$600. The 20 children in our Sunday School program received St. Nicholas Day treat bags and were very grateful. Isn't it a wonderful blessing that we have 20 active children in our program and Deacon Melissa and Kim Perlos manage to keep them all engaged. How exciting and we hope and pray it continues to grow.

ECW celebrated Pastor Sarah's 50th birthday with a beautiful flower arrangement for her. We also recently donated to Deacon Melissa's newly established discretionary fund. Romelle Frey has done an amazing job (with the help of Christie Swanson) continuing to keep our nut sales going and our profit had exceeded almost \$700 in early December. Sales are ongoing so that number will continue to increase. ECW also continues to sponsor altar flowers and aumbry candles in memory of former members and special holidays.

A special thanks goes out to our Vice-President, Valerie Rowley, who faithfully writes our monthly Epistle articles and to Cheryl Gumper who, as our treasurer, has made certain that all of the above donations and special events happen on time and has done many of the activities needed to make them happen. We are blessed with special people.

I am hoping that we can resume meeting next year as we all become vaccinated and the pandemic slows. Until then I will keep you updated on things that are happening and ask your input on any ideas you have for the remainder of our year (through July 2021) and as we begin again in September 2021.

May the Lord bless you and keep you and make His light to shine upon you,

Sandra Kilian

President



Building & Grounds

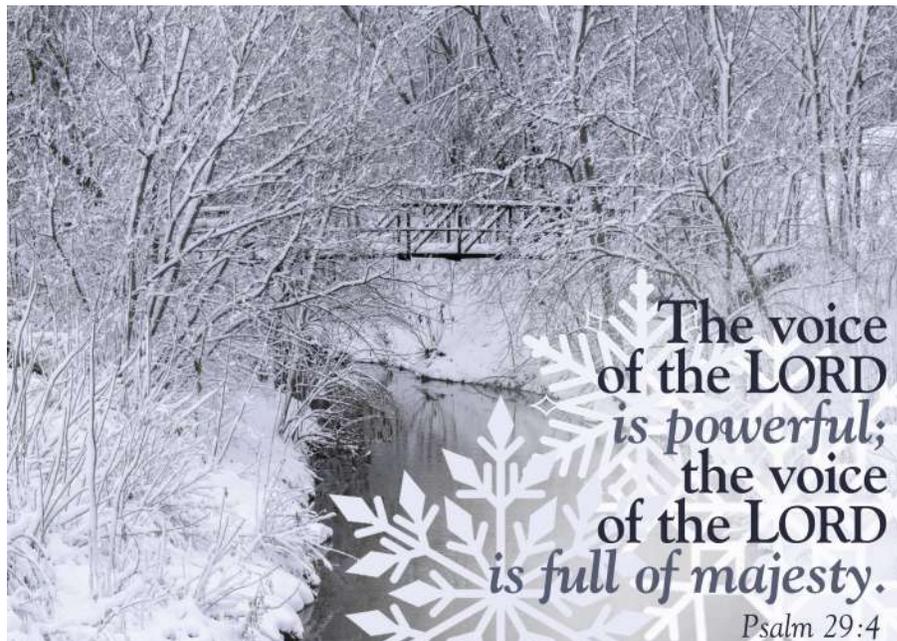
We have been fortunate this winter until recently. The snow fall was unexpected. However, our sexton Terry Treadway was prepared for the challenge clearing snow from our property in quick fashion.

We do have a back up for Terry in the event of a snow fall of 2 inches or more. When winter throws more than 2 inches at us Rose City Asphalt will remove the snow accumulation. They are a new contractor working with us and welcome their efforts in keeping our sidewalks and parking spaces clear.

Orkin has been our provider of pest control for some time. It came to my attention there was a problem. Orkin came out and met me on 12/24/20, the next day, they quickly took care of the problem.

Our Sexton Terry has been very helpful working to replace stained ceiling tiles, as well as replacing burnt out light bulbs along with his regular duties. As you may see Terry please thank him for his extra efforts.

Respectfully submitted,
 Kyle King
 Chairperson, Building & Grounds



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Community Action Agency is seeking volunteers for the 2021 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.

Would you like to help people in our community file their tax returns during the 2021 tax season?

As little as 4 hours a week - from January through April - could make a big difference!

OUR NEED:

- **Greeters** to welcome participants
- **Tax Preparers** to process tax returns

YOUR CONTRIBUTION:

- You **DON'T** have to have tax-preparation experience! **Training is provided** and experienced volunteers will assist you.
- You **DON'T** have to prepare tax returns! We also need Greeters to welcome participants and make sure documents are in order.
- You **DO** need to be committed, dependable, and provide excellent customer service!

This is a wonderful opportunity for retirees and college students - and anyone who wants to help!

OUR IMPACT:

VITA volunteers prepared nearly **3,000** returns for the 2019 tax year and helped secure more than **\$3.4M** in Federal & State tax refunds.

OUR PROMISE:

Safety is important to us! We will follow recommended COVID-19 precautions. **In-person and remote options will be available for volunteers.**

Orientation begins in December! Call us TODAY!



**Community
Action Agency**

Promoting Self-Sufficiency since 1965

www.caajlh.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Call Laurie: (517) 435-4372

Email: llazarus@caajlh.org

THANK YOU!!

To everyone that helped
With our virtual Christmas
services!



AND... to our talented St. Paul's
youth and their families for their
beautiful presentation of the
Epiphany Pageant!

If you haven't watched it already,
you can view the video on our
St. Paul's Facebook page.

Thank you Deacon Melissa and Sr.
Warden Michelle for your hard
work coordinating and producing it.



Reminder:

Our Annual Congregational
Meeting will be held via
Zoom this year on **Sunday,**
January 24th.

Watch your mail & email for
more info (time & Zoom
link) to come soon.

Vestry and committee leaders please email your **annual reports** to alicemulhearn@stpauljxmi.org **no later than Jan. 19th.**

We need people who are willing to serve on the Vestry and 3 members of St. Paul's to be our delegates for the annual Diocesan Convention. Please contact the church office or Sr. Warden Michelle Gibson if you are interested.

JANUARY



BIRTHDAYS

Peggy Wilds	January 6
Dee Hurlbert	January 10
Laura Rende	January 13
Josephine Alipit	January 14
Dana Burkey	January 19
Sandra Kilian	January 20
Kim Perlos	January 22
Tom Holsinger-Friesen	January 22



January

New Beginnings

Day 1 – 2 Corinthians 5:17	Day 20 – Romans 12:2
Day 2 – Jeremiah 29:11	Day 21 – Romans 6:3-4
Day 3 – Isaiah 43:18-19	Day 22 – John 10:10
Day 4 – Ephesians 4:22-24	Day 23 – Isaiah 41:13
Day 5 – Lamentations 3:22-24	Day 24 – Philippians 4:6-7
Day 6 – Isaiah 40:31	Day 25 – Proverbs 16:9
Day 7 – 1 Peter 1:3	Day 26 – Isaiah 60:1-2
Day 8 – Ezekiel 36:26	Day 27 – Psalm 40:1-3
Day 9 – Philippians 3:13-14	Day 28 – Galatians 6:14-16
Day 10 – Ecclesiastes 3:11	Day 29 – Psalm 98:1-3
Day 11 – Matthew 7:7-8	Day 30 – John 3:16-17
Day 12 – Acts 3:19-20	Day 31 – Revelation 21:4-5
Day 13 – Isaiah 65:17	
Day 14 – Proverbs 3:5-6	
Day 15 – Malachi 4:2	
Day 16 – 2 Chronicles 7:14	
Day 17 – Colossians 3:9-10	
Day 18 – Psalm 73:25-26	
Day 19 – Psalm 23:1-3	

