

July 2020
Volume
LXIII

THE EPISTLE

St. Paul's
Episcopal Church
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SUMMER

*The winter is past;
the rains are over and
gone*

-Song of Solomon 2:11



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Rector's Corner

Dear Friends in Christ,

On June 19th, we received an updated directive from our Bishops of the dioceses in the state of Michigan. This directive lays out the guidelines we will need to follow in order to open our parish again for in person worship. **(The revised Plan for Re-Entry is posted on our website: stpaulxmi.org.)**

Our vestry and I will work diligently in the coming weeks to prepare our church for a hopeful return to public worship on **Sunday, July 26th**. This date is absolutely contingent upon the control of the virus in our area and may change due to an increase in infection. Some highlights to know as we prepare to come back:

- For the time being, we are suspending the 8am service and will worship together at 10:30am, so our sexton doesn't have to disinfect the sanctuary between services.
- You will be required to wear a mask at all times.
- Your name will be recorded so we have a record of your attendance.
- You will be seated by an usher in a spot 6 feet away from anyone not of your household.
- You may receive communion in wafer only with no wine.
- There will be no passing of the peace through touch.
- There will be no receiving line at the end of the service.
- There will be no coffee hour or gathering at the end of service inside our building.
- There can be no congregational singing though we will have organ/piano and other music.

Our return to public worship is also contingent upon our installing technology in our sanctuary to live broadcast and record our weekly worship at 10:30 am each Sunday, so that those at who must stay home can still worship with us there. This will continue in perpetuity so that parishioners and visitors to our website can still enjoy our services online when they are unable to attend in person. After review of several different bids from tech companies, we have made a decision on one and are ready to proceed with the project in the hopes that it will be complete in the next few weeks. We will continue to give you updates on this and let you know when the project is finished. Our hope is that once the virus subsides, we will be able to be in closer contact with one another. For now we are being very cautious with anyone entering our building.

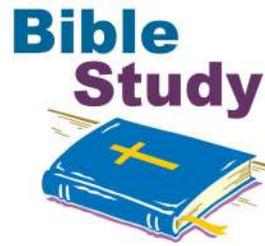
If you are sick or immunocompromised, please stay home. I am happy to call you and arrange a distance visit as needed. We will continue our online and by mail communications with the entire congregation and ask for your continued prayers for our staff and vestry as we learn a new way to be church together.

Meanwhile I leave you with our greatest strength in these times.

7 The Lord will keep you from all harm- he will watch over your life; 8 the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. Psalm 121:7-8

Faithfully,

Sarah+



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

Pastor Sarah began a 4 part series on the Spirituality of Conflict and all are invited to join! No prior biblical instruction needed. Just come with an open heart and mind!

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



Please note that in order to comply with our most recent directive regarding use of our building, we are continuing to keep in office functions at a minimum. This means that Pastor Sarah and Alice continue to work from home when possible, and office hours are fluid and on an “as needed” basis. Office phones continue to roll over to our cell phones, where you can leave a message if we cannot take your call immediately.

You are welcome to call for an appointment to come in the office, or if you need to come into the building to perform essential functions, there will be sign-in sheets posted by the doors in order to maintain a visitor log (including phone numbers and email addresses) for all who enter (in the event that they may have come in contact with someone with the disease and reporting is required). We appreciate your patience and understanding as we continue to navigate the guidelines handed down to us.

From our Sr. Warden...

A special friend recently asked me what my favorite song was...I'll admit...this is an easy one to answer. I'm a Rutter fan. From the first time I heard and then sang it, this beautiful piece of music has stayed with me. It also happens to be set to the same Psalm (different arrangement) that leads into the great British comedy Vicar of Dibley. And when I asked our Koinonia group a couple of weeks ago what helped them to keep their sanity amid all this chaos, one person spoke up and mentioned this very Psalm. I have always thought Psalm 23 to be the funeral Psalm, after all...that is where you often hear it. I'm not sure how that came to be (though I'm sure Sarah can enlighten me). Taking a step back and really reading the words in the context of our world today, I better understand how this Psalm is really for the living and the reason I have become so fond of the Rutter piece is because the words are a reminder that I need to hear, often and now more than ever. I am not Bible smart nor do I claim to be able to interpret passages in a scholarly fashion so I will simply put the words here...for you to read (again).

23 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Deep breath...so much going on in the world today and Jackson is no exception. There have been several protests near the church. There is much anxiety out there but these protests were held with minimal confrontation and conflict (Thanks be to God). In case you missed it, our very own Carrie and James Grant helped save a family of baby ducks that were trapped in the sewer.

It was such a great pleasure delivering yard signs to our parishioners. I enjoyed visiting with several families (while practicing social distancing) and even spotted a sign at a house I wasn't familiar with as I was out looking for a nursery.

Folks, I just need some semblance of normalcy...I need my church family, I need my bell ringers, I need to beat on a ball with my drumsticks to really loud music in Holy Spirit Hall. I'm ready and eager to get back to the way things were but I recognize we still have a long way to go. I'm here with you every step as we start to talk through the next steps. And because I want to leave this on a positive note...check out these beautiful songs on Youtube when you have a moment....

Rutter – The Lord is my Shepherd - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8f_oNgsWzFA
 The Georgia Boy Choir – The Lord is My Shepherd (Vicar of Dibley version) -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7O1nijBP7LE>

Peace,
Michelle



From our Jr. Warden...

As I have been contemplating the last several months, I have decided to view it more as an adventure than a hardship.

We have all been staying home and have had time to be introspective with our lives and what is really important to us. We have been able to spend more time with our spouses and family and learned more about them (sometimes more than we wanted to know) and who they really are and what they mean in our lives. Of course we have been forced to stay away from family that does not live in our household; and that has been a hardship. But even so, it makes us that more grateful to be able to see them and spend time with them as restrictions are easing.

Zoom church services have been one of the adventures we have all experienced over the last several months. We all miss going to church and seeing our friends, worshipping in our gorgeous sanctuary and hearing Sarah preach in person, but we have had a new adventure “going” to church on zoom. Sarah has been doing an excellent job preaching to us and bringing the Gospel into our homes and our lives. It has been an adventure to log in every week and see our friends in their homes. I have to say I will miss “going” to church in my sweat pants and T shirt, but I am also anxious to get back to our regular church.

We will be transitioning back into church sometime in the future, but hope to be able to continue with broadcasting the service via zoom. We will have the best of both worlds! Those of us who are comfortable returning to the physical church will be able, and those of us who feel safer staying at home will still be able to join us in service. God is with us in both arenas. Let’s all enjoy and embrace our new adventures into church life.

Debbie Batchelder





Our Sunday 10:30 am worship will continue this week on Zoom. Follow this link to watch online or you can call in from any phone to participate each Sunday. Zoom is not hard to use and will allow us to see and hear each other!

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9046084672>

Meeting ID: 904 608 4672

Or dial in by phone

+1 929 205 6099 US (New

Meeting ID: 904 608 4672

You can also view the service later on Facebook.

Follow the link: <https://www.facebook.com/stpauljxmi/>

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO HAVE A FACEBOOK ACCOUNT TO VIEW OUR VIDEOS!



Diana Sinclair is faithfully collecting names for our prayer list, so please call **(517-250-9729)** or email her 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.



Resources For Anti-Racism And Education

We encourage you to go to the EDOMI website and check out the many resources available including, books, articles, online classes, video series, and much more:

<https://www.edomi.org/resources-for-anti-racism/>



Check out the YAYA pages on the EDOMI website for resources designed especially for youth and young adults:

<https://www.edomi.org/yaya/about/>

<https://www.edomi.org/yaya/yaya-resources/>

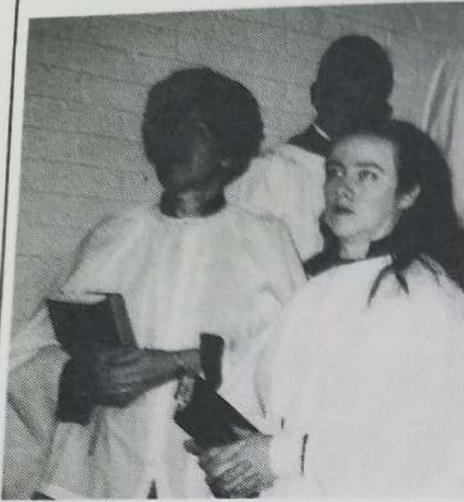
There is a special section for “Help during Social Distancing” that includes virtual field trips, tours and VBS Programs.



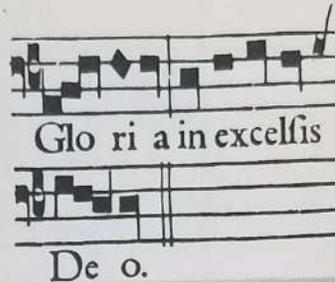
**OUR CHURCH'S
HISTORY**

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE CHOIRS!

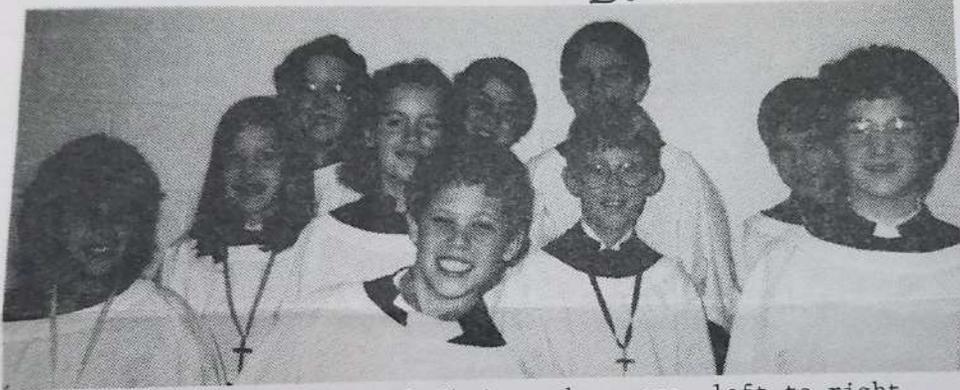
A SPECIAL thanks goes to all choir members who worked so hard and well to make the Advent and Christmas services so beautiful. From Junior Choir members Chris Norris, Joshua Lenz and Missy Tejada to Organist/Choirmaster Steven Flick each and every musical contribution is appreciated greatly.



Parish choir members, left to right, Kathy Honton, Ron Larkin, and Cindy Rowen await the start of the worship service. Members not pictured are Brian Buehler, Gloria Larkin, Anne and Bill Romoser, Zal Sherwood, and Sparry Sparks.



ABOVE: High School chorister Natasha Lapinski waits for Maria Lapinski, Jenny Tejada, Wendy Holmes, Mark and Cliff Swanson, Rob Reynolds, David Wolber and Eric Holmes.



ABOVE: These happy Youth Choir members are, left to right, Marcie Porter, Joanna Frang, Rebecca Catlin, Kristen Lenz, Kris Porter, Laura Puhr, Geoff Moore, David Larkin, David Berthiaume, and Carrie Tejada. Not pictured are Simeon Frang, Michael Norris, and Allyson Puhr.

A fun look back at a page from an Epistle Newsletter from January 1987.

Do you recognize any of the names or faces?



A Note from Bishop Bonnie Perry:

Dear Friends of St. Paul's Episcopal Church,

I am overwhelmed with thanksgiving.

Your contribution to the Bishop's COVID19 Fund of \$10000 has made a measurable impact on our state, and an immeasurable impact on the communities of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan. In these unprecedented times, you have shown that our diocese is still inspired and engaged. You have answered Jesus's call to "feed the hungry." We care and we act, because we believe.

Through the generosity of over 500 individuals, families, our congregations, and friends across the country, we are able to make a difference. With our collective donations of \$220,000, over 500,000 fresh, high-quality meals will be shared with a half a million of our neighbors who are experiencing the heartbreak of food insecurity during this once in a century worldwide crisis. We are now able to make an impact on the food bank system throughout the communities of our diocese. Such an amazing gift!

You have made all of this possible and I am grateful.

In Christ,

*The Rt. Rev. Dr. Bonnie A. Perry
11th Bishop of the Diocese of Michigan*





Jeff Thomas	July 6
Natalie Magnusson	July 9
James Grant	July 10
Gene S. Wandel	July 20
Charles Thomas	July 19
Alice's Birthday	July 19
Romelle Frey	July 24
Sheryl Foor	July 24



Did we miss you or a family members birthday or anniversary? We may not know it! Please call or e-mail Alice at the church office so we can put it on our list for next time!



Ron & Valerie Rowley	July 8
Bob & Barbara Duke	July 11



Give
Online

We now have an easier way to donate online!
You can use our new "Give Now" button on our website.

<https://stpauljxmi.org/>