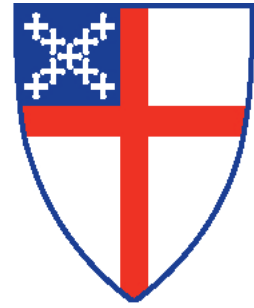


saint paul's EPISCOPAL CHURCH

inspiring • caring • accepting



September 4, 2019

St. Paul's Family:

We find ourselves in the midst of an exciting time at St. Paul's. We are blessed by so much in our lives and parish. We give thanks for the members of the Encore Shop, the Happy Kitchen, the Pastoral Care Team, and our other ministries who continue to serve our community. We also give thanks for the now-completed construction funded by the Capital Campaign. Your generosity and St. Paul's balanced 2019 budget continues to fund vital ministry. It is a pleasure to serve as the leadership board of such an amazing place of worship, which offers beautifully updated community gathering spaces. Thank you to all who have donated their time and treasure to our parish!

However, we must not forget the potential pitfalls of such thanksgiving! We cannot become content to the point of thinking that our work is done! Rather, we need to look forward and build off of these amazing ministries and resources.

As a vestry, we have spent the first part of this year intentionally learning more about where we are as a parish and discerning how we want to move forward. We began this process this past Lent with the Congregational Assessment Tool parish survey and a book study on the "Missional Church." Since Easter, we've consistently reviewed and discussed parish feedback and our new learnings: at our vestry retreat, monthly meetings, and in individual conversations. We even restructured our monthly meetings to allow a full hour of conversation about our mission as individuals and as a congregation. We are excited by what we see ahead of us.

We heard over and over that you desire greater connection to God and to each other so that we can be more connected to our neighborhoods. In some ways, we have already begun this next journey. We are already blessed with great education for adults and the reimagining of Children's Chapel this fall is forming our youngest members. This month we will welcome Bishop Bascom with a slate of new members and two baptisms. We will be blessed in the coming year as we embark on formation and renewal in our focuses on diversity and welcome before, during, and after Fr. Patrick's sabbatical. These are the beginnings of a journey of transformation through our worship and service.

We believe this is a journey that all of St. Paul's can walk together. We see a near future where we empower and support one another in our individual mission and ministry. In 2020, we see this happening in two ways: Enhancing our connectedness through worship and "in-reach" while equipping individuals and teams for new forms of "out-reach."

Worship and "In-reach:" We are excited about the possibilities of enhancing our music ministry with a Choral Scholar program. We have applied for a matching grant from the diocese for this program and if we are able to meet its needs budgetarily, we would like to bring three paid student musicians to support our choir in their ministry of leading us in making a joyful noise! "In-reach" means more opportunities to gather as a

congregation for intentional fellowship, listening, and support outside of Sundays through small group study and conversation. We are also excited about the newly formed Lay Discernment Committee, a fruit of Deacon Sandy's sabbatical this year. This group is meant to be a resource for each of us in helping us listen to God's ever-present Call for our lives.

"Out-reach:" One of the most exciting pieces of our future is the possibility of empowering outreach. We are immensely proud of our extant outreach, we care for so many people through the Encore Shop and Happy Kitchen. It is clear, though, that however proud each of us may be, some of us don't hear God's call to service through these ministries. If you are among those many who have discerned that these keystone, historic ministries of St. Paul's are not for you, what else are you be excited about? As a congregation, we should continue to support and grow these important ministries, but these don't have to be our only forms of outreach! We see a future where St. Paul's supports you with a process of discernment and a micro-grant to kick off a new idea. These grants can buttress us as we go forward enriching, connecting, and spreading God's love through our own individual passions and blessings. Finally, we see each of us growing to understand and practice the reality that our spiritual lives can be deeply connected to our passions and circles outside of St. Paul's; we all do God's "work" through our contributions of time, talent and treasure. This is ministry and we should claim it!

With this vision for our future and in this spirit, we are excited to announce this year's annual giving campaign: ***Blessed to be a Blessing***. God first called Abram by saying, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you." God made Abram a promise: "I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing...and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Genesis 12:1-3) In Abram's footsteps, we have been bestowed with great blessings: as individuals and as a congregation. This year, the vestry asks: Where is God calling us to move forward? And how can we join God and Abram in being a blessing?

We believe that God has richly blessed each of us and we have the beginnings of a transformation here at St. Paul's. As a congregation, we have an opportunity to join with God, each other, and our neighborhoods through committing our resources. That is why we ask you to join us in this journey. To grow into this vision in 2020 we would like to see our budget grow by 10%. This growth would allow us to start the choral scholar program and to fund mission micro-grants for the coming year in addition to meeting the rest of our budget. How can you help us meet this goal?

Please join us for our Annual Giving Campaign Kick-Off: "A Taste of Italy" at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 21. In addition to an evening of food and fellowship, members of the vestry will join Fr. Patrick and stewardship chair, David Littrell, in a presentation about our mission-focused vision for 2020. Please complete and bring the attached pledge card or receive a card at the kick-off. All are invited, childcare provided!

We are blessed to be your vestry and to join you in this season of blessing!

In Christ's Love,

The St. Paul's Vestry

Deb Lamb

Yvonne Amanor-Boadu

Mary Vanier

Candie White

Betsy Barrett

Katie Dempsey

Marian Fuller

Joe Barbercheck

Landon Leiker

Phil Ryan

