St. Paul’s Epistle
August 15th, 2020

No Matter Who You Are, Or Where You Have Been, There Is A Place For You At St. Paul’s

www.stpaulsyr.org
Dear sisters and brothers,

As a child, summer vacation meant riding in the car with my family to visit my grandparents in Wisconsin. The trip began with loading suitcases and books, baseball gloves and board games into the station wagon. We kids were happy and energetic as we drove out of our neighborhood and onto the highway. We were in for a long day of driving, over 12 hours from Cleveland, Ohio to Belmont, Wisconsin.

We knew we were getting close to the end of the trip when the car left the highway and we began to drive through miles of lush, hilly, farmland. My older sister would lead us in a song: ‘We’re on our way to Grandma’s house, ha, ha, ha…’ (If you note that you have never heard this song before, that’s because my sister invented the song!)

The beginning of the trip was fun and the end of the trip was fun. The middle of the trip was not so much fun. The middle of the trip was long.

You and I are also on a journey right now. We are making our way through the pandemic of 2020. In almost every way our journey is different from those childhood trips to Wisconsin, but it is similar in having a clear beginning, and a middle and an end.

The beginning of the pandemic lasted from February, when some of us began to prepare, until May, when our county and state successfully ‘flattened the curve’ and we began the reopening process. The middle of the pandemic began in June and will continue until the beginning of distribution of a vaccine in 2021.

Just as it was during my childhood trips to Wisconsin, this middle portion is the longest part of the journey. The middle is the time when we forget why we are on this
journey. We get impatient. We get tired of the rules. We get grumpy. In the middle we lose focus.

Part of my job is to help us stay focused. Here are four guidelines I suggest for us as we make our way through the middle part of the epidemic as a church:

1. Follow a process for staying healthy.
2. Create new ways to engage in worship, mission and work.
3. Stay connected with each other.
4. Support individuals who have not been heard or seen.

Stay healthy.

Our vestry and staff are guided by state and diocesan directives, local data about the epidemic and the latest research about spread of the virus as we create processes to help our members and staff stay healthy. One example of this is our 25/35/45 Rule. Decisions about our reopening are based on data. We began our reopening process when the number of daily infections in Onondaga county was in the mid-twenties. We will pause our reopening process if daily infections increase to the mid-thirties. We will close our buildings if daily infections increase to the mid-forties. (The good news: as of mid-August daily infections for Onondaga County have dropped to the mid-teens.)

Engage in worship, mission and work.

The success of our safety processes let us give more attention to other important needs, like worship, pursuing social and economic justice and finding joy in our lives. This is a big change from our situation in the Spring. It is essential for us to engage in the complex, coherent mission of the church, which is to experience and share God’s love and truth with the world.

I am heartened that groups as diverse as The Caring Place, the Finance Committee and the Open Doors task force have found new ways to engage with their vital work. I am delighted with the way our members and our staff have created new ways for us to be engaged in worship, mission and fellowship, ranging from ‘Contemplative Studies & Practices’ (Tuesdays at 4) to ‘Closer to Zero-Waste’ (see p. 10).
This middle portion of the epidemic will be long. It is not possible or healthy for us to remain isolated as many of us were during the first weeks of the epidemic. I encourage you to find a way to engage in worship and other activities that are most important to you.

Stay Connected.

The strength of St. Paul’s has been revealed in the many ways our members have been staying connected during the past five months. The future strength of St. Paul’s will be determined partly by whether we continue to find ways to stay connected during the epidemic. What is the next step for you and for your group?

Support those unseen or unheard.

The sudden disruption of our social interactions in March has been especially difficult for a few dozen of our members. Those who don’t have easy access to a computer or internet connection, those who were less involved prior to the epidemic, and those who live alone are sometimes left out of our conversations.

Jesus made sure no one was left out as he engaged the people of his time and place. We need to do the same. I encourage you to call or even visit (safely) those you have not seen or heard from in recent weeks. I encourage you to call me, even if it just to say hello. Especially if you have not talked to me in recent weeks, I encourage you to call me, whenever it is a good time for you. If you leave a message, I promise to call you back.

I miss seeing you face to face! Together we will find our way through this middle part of the pandemic.

Fr. Philip Major
I commend to you, our sister Phoebe,  
a deacon of the church at Centreae,  
so that you may welcome her in the Lord.

Romans 16:1

The Ministry of Deacons

We often think of a deacon as a person who is on their way to becoming a priest. However, sources in the New Testament (including Romans and Acts) describe the ministry of deacons as separate from that of priests, and not as a transitional position. In the New Testament and today deacons serve in many ways.

On Sunday, August 16th, we will welcome the Rev. Kay Drebert as our preacher for worship at 8 a.m. and for the live stream at 10 a.m. Kay is a ‘permanent deacon’, that is, she has no intention of serving as a priest. Kay was ordained as a deacon in the Diocese of Fond du Lac about twenty years ago. Kay and her wife, the Rev. Becky Drebert, moved to Binghamton, NY in 2014 where they serve together at Christ Church. In addition to serving as a deacon, Kay works as a social worker. We look forward to learning more about the ministry of deacons and hearing some good news of God’s love from Deacon Kay’s perspective.

Father Philip will be on vacation from Friday, August 14th through Saturday, August 22nd. Please contact one of the wardens, Betsy Elkins (Senior Warden) or Tom Cantwell (Junior Warden) if there is an urgent need.
Some Thoughts from the Senior Warden: Is it the worst of times and the best of times?
—By Betsy Elkins, Senior Warden

This may be a poor attempt to paraphrase Charles Dickens but it does seem like one way to describe our current time. It is the worst of times. Nothing is normal, we are not seeing our family and friends, we are isolated. Everything is different as we adapt to worshiping and socializing in new ways. And we frankly don’t like it very much. Live streaming church and zoom coffee will never replace in person church and coffee hour in the Brewster Room. And many of our members are still “left out” from these ways of being together.

But out of these worst times have come some good things:
- We have shown how strong and capable we are as a faith community.
- We have a great team of people at St Paul’s who are working very creatively to get through this current situation.
- Staff, vestry, teams and committees are working harder than ever.
- New leaders and volunteers have come forth to participate in new ways. Roy and Mark have set up our technology for live streaming. Bill Pitcher is building the Open Pantry for free food in front of the church. Amanda Fledderjohann is offering yoga classes. Jessica King is leading a discussion for those interested in gardening. Tiffany and Vivian have stepped forward as new leaders of The Feast.
- Our members are taking care of one another. Many are making phone calls to members, writing letters, delivering groceries and Carol Decker is delivering individual birthday cakes!

This is all pretty wonderful; the best of times in the middle of the worst. Yet at the same time there is another “worst” feeling we are sharing. We are exhausted. We are tired of the isolation, the uncertainty, the anxiety, the fear. We are becoming, as someone said to me this week, “frayed around the edges.” We are maxed out!
One person among us who definitely feels a bit frayed is your priest, Fr. Philip. He has been working hard to do so much for all of us during this time and he admits to feeling a bit overwhelmed with his work. At the same time, he feels he isn’t doing enough! Just as we are missing him, he wishes he could call or visit with us each week.

It has been a privilege to work with Fr. Philip at this time. We have regular conversations as warden and priest. I have seen up close how hard he is working. St. Paul’s is fortunate to have a priest among us who truly cares for us, works hard for us while sacrificing his own time. While he has worked some long days and long weeks, Fr. Philip understands that things come up that demand his immediate attention. It is really important to Philip that you call him if you need to; he is never too busy to care for you.

It is indeed the worst and best of times. Things are hard, but people are working at St. Paul’s to make it better. Thank you wonderful people of St. Paul’s for all that you do; thank you Philip in particular. How fitting it is that Philip will be on vacation for a week this month. We wish him some of the best of times as he gets to relax away from us.

Ice Cream Social again!

On July 17 about 18 of us met for ice cream in downtown’s Clinton Square at The Ice Cream Stand. It was so good to see folks, face to face (actually mask to mask until we started to eat our ice cream!) We decided that we should do this again. Mark your calendars for Friday August 28 at 7 pm.

After we purchased our ice cream, we walked one block south to the plaza in front of the Federal Building where we had plenty of space to spread out, even sit down at picnic tables or on a wall where we could visit safely. We will have some St. Paul’s masks with us to give to those who haven’t received one yet. Join us.
Eucharist Celebrations Begin Sunday, August 23rd
—By Father Philip

Thanks to your efforts, Onondaga County and the State of New York continue to make good progress in suppressing the spread of the new coronavirus. As a result, we plan to begin our eucharist celebrations Sunday, August 23rd. We will be saying the Eucharistic Prayer at all Sunday worship services beginning on the 23rd. Communion will be distributed in the form of wafers at our in-person worship services at 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. I hope you are able to join us for our celebration of the resurrecting power of God’s love in our lives, either in-person or through our live stream services!

Fr. Philip
Upcoming Services

**August 16th, 2020 ~ Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost**
**Morning Prayer Rite II**
The First Lesson: Genesis 45:1-15
The Second Lesson: Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32
The Gospel: Matthew 15: (10-20), 21-28

**August 23rd, 2020 ~ Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost**
**Holy Eucharist Rite II**
The First Lesson: Exodus 1:8-2:10
The Second Lesson: Romans 12:1-8
The Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20

**August 30th, 2020 ~ Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost**
**Holy Eucharist Rite II**
The First Lesson: Exodus 3:1-15
The Second Lesson: Romans 12:9-21
The Gospel: Matthew 16:21-28

A great photo by Betsy Elkins of the Fledderjohann Family on the ‘Kissing Bench’ in the E. Fayette St. garden.
New Group Being Formed...Closer to Zero Waste Group
—By Jessica King and DJ Igelsrud

If you are like we are, knowing that climate change is real and wanting to be part of the solution, trying on your own but wanting to connect with others that feel like you do, and you like the idea of sharing ideas and solutions, large and small, then join us on Tuesday, August 18 at 7:30 on Zoom to be a part of the new Closer to Zero-Waste group. We hope that many of you will feel this topic is important and will join us!!

Feminist Theology
—By Laurie Sanderson

Feminist Theology has continued to meet via Zoom! And even when we meet again in person, we will continue the Zoom connection not only to reach those who aren't able to leave the house but because friends from afar join us. This month we welcomed Barbara Schafer and Marilyn Sharron!

In August we will meet on Tuesday, August 18th at 7 pm to discuss an article on the books that have become canons for our lives with Jesus. If you are interested, contact Laurie at lascsw3@aol.com and she will share it with you. For September we will be discussing Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World by Dr. Vivek Murphy. An essential topic for now, don't you think? Please consider joining us.
St. Paul’s Calendar  August 12th through 31st

Wednesday, August 12, 7:00 p.m. Gardener’s Group—Zoom RSVP w/Jessica King
Thursday, August 13, 7:30 p.m. Evening Prayer w/Music for Inspiration—Live Stream
Sunday, August 16, 8:00 a.m. In Person Service—RSVP by email to Mary Hastings
Sunday, August 16, 9:00 a.m. Coffee Hour—Zoom
Sunday, August 16, 10:00 a.m. Sunday Worship—Live Stream
Sunday, August 16, 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour—Zoom
Sunday, August 16, 2:00 p.m. South Sudanese Prayers—Zoom

Tuesday, August 18, 2:00 p.m. Bible Study—Zoom
Tuesday, August 18, 4:00 p.m. Centering Prayer—Zoom RSVP w/ Sue Wright
Tuesday, August 18, 7:00 p.m. Closer to Zero Waste—Zoom
Tuesday, August 18, 7:00 p.m. Feminist Theology—Zoom RSVP w/ Laurie Sanderson
Wednesday, August 19, 7:00 p.m. Gardener’s Group—Zoom RSVP w/Jessica King
Sunday, August 23, 8:00 a.m. In Person Service—RSVP by email to Mary Hastings
Sunday, August 23, 9:00 a.m. Coffee Hour—Zoom
Sunday, August 23, 10:00 a.m. Sunday Worship—Live Stream
Sunday, August 23, 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour—Zoom
Sunday, August 23, 2:00 p.m. South Sudanese Prayers—Zoom
Sunday, August 23, 4:00 p.m. Worship In The Park—Upper Onondaga Park

Tuesday, August 25, 2:00 p.m. Bible Study—Zoom
Tuesday, August 25, 4:00 p.m. Centering Prayer—Zoom RSVP w/ Sue Wright
Tuesday, August 25, 5:00 p.m. Buildings & Grounds Meeting—Zoom
Wednesday, August 26, 7:00 p.m. Gardener’s Group—Zoom RSVP w/Jessica King
Friday, August 28, 5:30 p.m. The Feast—Zoom
Friday, August 28, 7:00 p.m. Ice Cream Social—Meet at “The Ice Cream Stand” on Clinton Square.
Sunday, August 30, 8:00 a.m. In Person Service—RSVP by email to Mary Hastings
Sunday, August 30, 9:00 a.m. Coffee Hour—Zoom
Sunday, August 30, 10:00 a.m. Sunday Worship—Live Stream
Sunday, August 30, 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour—Zoom
Sunday, August 30, 2:00 p.m. South Sudanese Prayers—Zoom
Sunday, August 30, 4:00 p.m. Worship In The Park—Upper Onondaga Park
The amount of this year’s money was $5,235.99. The following projects were submitted for consideration by the Women of St. Paul’s, the Finance Committee and the Vestry. We are pleased to announced that they were approved by the Vestry at their July meeting.

- Upgrade for sound system for live streaming church services
  Submitted by Father Philip Major:
  
  - Dell Inspiron Laptop Computer 15 5000
  - Logitech ConferenceCam Connect
  - Epson Ceiling Mount Wireless Projector #2150
  - Plus ceiling mount bracket
  - Yamaha Mixing Board MG10 and Microphone package.
  - Replacing the original music rack and pedal lighting (dating from 1967) with new LED lighting for nave organ. This would greatly enhance future organ events which are scheduled for later this year.
  Submitted by Jim Potts, Organist and Choir Master

- Annual refurbishing of the Nan Dorr Garden and the Fayette St Garden
  Submitted by Wendy Hoblyn Jones

This leaves us with a small balance to go into the Fund for future use. We feel it is prudent to have some money left in the Fund for anything urgent that may happen during these uncertain times. It has been a particularly difficult year to make decisions of this kind.

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE DORR FAMILY ONCE AGAIN FOR THEIR VERY GENEROUS GIFT TO THE WOMEN OF ST. PAUL’S

Nan Dorr Endowment Committee:

Wendy Hoblyn Jones, Chair; Liz Belden Handler, President; Stacie McHugh, Vice President; Betsy Elkins, Acting Treasurer; Gelene Lewis Dorr; Joan Sammons.
First Friday  
—By Carol Decker

I’m still wearing a mask, social distancing when I shop, and invite small groups of friends or family for a meal on the back deck—only 4 or 5 people, so we can sit away from one another.

Last Sunday my son was baptized at St. Michael’s Lutheran Church in Camillus, NY. It thrilled to be one of seven people actually in church for the service. Those of you who attended St. Paul’s must have been thrilled to be there, too.

St. Michael’s has done a drive-through hot dog dinner for the past two months. No charge, just announced it in their bulletin. The first month they had about 30 people drive though the parking lot and pick up a hot dog dinner-in-a-bag, the second month they had about 60 people for their dinner-in-a-bag.

It’s not quite First Friday, but it makes me think. If you have any ideas, please share them with me on my email: cdecker8@twcny.rr.com

Meanwhile, I hope this finds all of you safe and healthy.

Women’s Retreat in October  
—By Laurie Sanderson

Many of you received our email, but in case we missed you. We will be meeting Thursday evening October 8th through October 10th, ending before noon, at St. Margaret's House in New Hartford. The Reverend Kathy Major will lead us in "Wild Nights Are My Glory", (topic chosen before the pandemic!)

St. Margaret's is big enough so we can keep social distance with our masks on! The cost is $180.00. If you want to sign up or have questions, please contact Laurie Sanderson at 315-320-1518. Space is limited, so make your reservations!
Robert T. Frye July 11, 2020

Robert Theodore Frye was born on May 24, 1928 to James and Viola Frye. He attended Batavia School for the Blind and was a lifetime resident of Syracuse. Bob retired from the Best Photo Lab. He was a long-time member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, having served as a lector, morning prayer leader, and office volunteer. He will be remembered for his humor, optimism and strong faith. Bob is survived by several nieces and nephews and his loving friends at Villa Scalabrini and St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

A funeral service was held on Tuesday, July 21, 2020 through a live stream from St. Paul’s. An interment took place at St. Mary's Cemetery in Minoa. Contributions in Bob's memory can be made to St. Paul's Church (memo Bob Frye) and sent to 310 Montgomery Street, Syracuse, NY 13202. To express sympathy, please visit fairchildmeech.com
Nancy (Bentley) Ridings, 86, of Syracuse and Cazenovia passed away peacefully Sunday, July 26, 2020. She was born August 6, 1933 in Syracuse to Harold and Catharine Bentley. Nancy attended Abbott Academy and was a graduate of Dana Hall; she also attended Syracuse University where she was a member of the Gamma Phi Beta sorority.

Nancy married David Ridings in 1952 and enjoyed 68 years of marriage. She was a member of the Junior League and was involved with community work through the Volunteer Center of Syracuse. Nancy actively participated at the Century Club and the Cazenovia Club. She loved classical music and was an ardent supporter of the Syracuse Symphony, Symphoria and Syracuse Stage. Throughout her life, Nancy enjoyed sailing and grew up sailing a comet on Cazenovia Lake. She and David enjoyed spending many years sailing throughout the Caribbean. Her outdoor adventures included skiing and traveling throughout the world as well as residing in Munich, Germany with her family for five years. She was a lifelong member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church which was an essential part of her life.

Nancy is survived by her husband, David; her loving daughters, Sybil Oakes of Skaneateles, Nancy (Timothy) Andrepont of Beaufort, SC., Cynthia (Thomas) Rinaldi of Cape Coral, FL. and Sara Morrow of Skaneateles; her sister, Catharine (Ellis) Waller; 10 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren. Memorial services will be held at a later date. Contributions in memory of Nancy may be made to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 310 Montgomery St., Syracuse, NY 13202. To leave a message of sympathy for the Ridings family, please visit www.michaelebrownfuneralservices.com
Deadlines for Upcoming Issues of The Epistle

The deadline for the September 1st Epistle will be Sunday, August 23rd.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
300 East Fayette Street
Syracuse, New York 13202
www.stpaulsy.org
315-474-6053
(office & mailing address)
(street address)