



St. Paul's Epistle

"To know Christ and to make Him known"

FROM THE PRIEST IN CHARGE

To Give One's Heart

Stewardship has been defined by some as "the way in which humanity chooses to interact with God in creation." It is a response to God's interaction with us. In understanding stewardship we gain an understanding of ourselves as partners with God in the Divine-human drama.

Stewardship, then, is the gift of one's heart. It is the gift of our heart, in response to the gift of God's Heart to us. The gift of God's Heart to us is a passionate and a passion-filled gift of love. Our stewardship, how we live out our lives, is our response to God's unfathomable love. It is our response to Bethlehem. It is our response to the Garden of Gethsemane: to Jesus' tears and Judas' kiss. It is a response to the hard wood of the cross. Finally, our stewardship is a response to an empty tomb and a resurrected Savior.

As we move into and through Lent on the way to Easter morning we remember that the Church has called us to a time of self-examination and repentance concerning our response to the gift of God's Heart. The reality of Easter is dulled without our understanding the great cost of God's love for us.

In its greatest sense, stewardship is inseparably linked to the mission of the Church through an understanding of the Great Commandment - to love God with our whole being, and to love our neighbor as one like ourselves (Matthew 22:34-40). Stewardship of God's love calls us to respect the dignity and seek the welfare of all persons, no matter how near or far, no matter what race, creed, color or gender. All, all, all are created in the image and likeness of God—all are our sisters and brothers, children of the Living God. Material sacrifice and giving are important, but not at the loss of justice, mercy and faith (Matthew 23:23-24).

Jesus has taught that where our treasures are, there our hearts will be also (Matthew 6:21). Where are our treasures and what are our treasures? Do we treasure the gift of God's Heart, or do we only treasure who we are and what we have? Do we see stewardship as nothing more than our annual pledge agonized over each fall, or do we see stewardship as everything we say and do in our lives after we say, "I believe?"

This Lent let us heed the call to faithful stewardship. Let us remember the gift of God's Heart. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son...." Let us learn anew what it means to offer the gift of our hearts in return to the Living God; to "love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and with all our strength," and to "love our neighbor as one like ourselves." This is the summary of the Law. This is what it means to give our hearts to the One who gives us the very Heart of God.

Lenten Blessings, Jim+



Once again the St. Paul's ECW carries out a successful **Souper Sunday** fundraiser. Proceeds from this event went to support the Rector's Discretionary Fund which assists parishioners and members of the wider community with emergency needs.

Reconciliation Process Continues

Please plan to join us for the next step in the ongoing reconciliation process at St. Paul's. Canons Hunn and Weigert will be with us on Monday March 7 and Saturday March 12. There will be four sessions to choose from on each day beginning at 8:30 am: (8:30-10, 10:30 - 12, 1-2:30 and 3-4:30). Choose one from the signup sheets near or in Lawrence Hall. These sessions are designed to be fun, and the data which comes out of these sessions will ultimately be used in the problem solving sessions later. If you have opinions about what matters most to St Paul's then you need to come to one of these sessions.

Our next step is to set up small group meetings where we document people's varying interests by encouraging the congregation to sign up for a small group. These meetings will last no more than 1 ½ hours, and have a maximum of 12 participants in each group. Parishioners can sign up for the group that they want to participate in, allowing that they may want to be with friends, or to meet at a time that is convenient for their schedule.

Please note that it is not necessary to have participated in the first two workshops to attend one of the small group meetings.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE...AND MORE



Stop Hunger Now

We had another successful event for Stop Hunger Now at St. Paul's on Saturday, February 5. Despite the rain, about 75 people worked very hard and quickly, and we packaged 20,000 meals before noon. Young, old and in-between worked together. What a wonderful day for St. Paul's. We raised our \$5,000 goal and are planning to hold another event in February 2012. St. Paul's has worked with SHN since 2006, and we just keep getting better. Thank you all for supporting and for joining in this effort to help others.

Acolyte Training

Saturday, March 19 11:00 am

Acolyte Training followed by Pizza

Ongoing and new acolytes welcome

Contact: Billie Stevens 919-934-9263

Forward Day by Day

Please let the office know if you regularly pick up your copy of Forward Day by Day at St. Paul's. Also advise the office if you prefer the small or large-print edition.

Food Pantry

Each month, we continue to collect food or money for the Food Pantry in Smithfield. From September until December, 2010, we collected \$170 plus the food brought each month. The check has been sent to the Food Pantry to buy bulk food, and each month, nonperishable foods are delivered to the Food Pantry. Thank you for supporting this ministry.

Opportunities to Serve

Hello! Our hope is that you have found an opportunity to serve at St. Paul's. If not, here are more exciting and interesting ways to do so.

ACOLYTES AND EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

- A. Acolytes and Eucharistic Ministers serve in many worship services that take place at St. Paul's. They see that each service runs smoothly, and they assist the clergy.
- B. Eucharistic Ministers assist in administering the chalice at the Eucharist.
- C. Lectors read the Bible readings and the Prayers of the People at each service.
- D. Acolytes process the cross, torches and banner. The Crucifer also serves at setting the table, washing the priest's hands and refilling the chalice for Eucharistic Ministers.
- E. Children's Chapel Leaders conduct and teach a children's service in the Children's Chapel each Sunday during the 11:00 service. Children rejoin their parents in the nave at the Passing of the Peace. Contact: Billie Stevens 919-934-9263.

THE DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

The Daughters of the King is a lay order for women of the Episcopal Church and was organized in 1885. Members make a lifelong pledge to prayer and service to support the extension of Christ's Kingdom and the spiritual life of their parish. Our chapter, St. Mary Magdalen, began in 1996. A self-study is required in order to assist interested women in learning about the Order and to determine if this is a spiritual path to which they are called. Each Chapter maintains a confidential prayer list. Any request for prayer is welcome. Contact: Rhonda Smith 919-934-6203.

Time to Sign Up!

There are several St. Paul's signup sheets just waiting for your name! Take a look and add your John or Jane Hancock on the line:

- There are still many dates available to sign up for altar flowers in honor or memory of a loved one (**bulletin board outside Lawrence Hall**).
- Sign up to host Coffee Hour (**bulletin board**).
- Shrove Tuesday is coming upon us fast – March 8. The Brotherhood of St. Andrew will cook pancakes and sausage for us. It would help them to know how many folks to expect for dinner! (**bulletin board or in the Narthex**)
- Save a life – give blood! We're hoping to have a Red Cross blood drive at St. Paul's. Whether and when we can host such an event depends on how many of us sign up. The blood you donate today may save a friend's or loved one's life tomorrow (**bulletin board**).
- There is a signup sheet for our Wednesday Evenings in Lent. Members from several ministry groups at St. Paul's will provide soup and bread for the five Wednesday evenings in Lent and Wednesday in Holy Week. Meals will be followed by study. The curriculum is entitled "Discovering God's Vision for Your Life: You and Your Spiritual Gifts." It involves discerning our Spiritual Gifts and how we carry out ministry in God's name. We will have activities for children if we know they will be present (**bulletin board and Narthex**). A \$4.00 per person donation will help offset the cost of the skills inventory used in the class.
- On **March 7** (Monday Evening) and **March 12** (Saturday) we will continue the reconciliation process at St. Paul's. Small groups up to 12 in number will meet for 1 ½ hours on one of these two dates for the workshops. Please sign up as soon as possible (**signup sheets in Lawrence Hall**).

The Jr. Warden's Job Jar offers opportunities for members of St. Paul's to assist in the care and repair of our property (**signup sheet in Lawrence Hall**).

St. Mark's Raleigh hosts book sale

St. Mark's Episcopal Church (1725 N. New Hope Road, Raleigh) will host their second annual book sale on Saturday, March 19 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Workshops on Radical Welcome: Diocese to host events at two sites in March and April

Our Diocese is bringing well-known author the Rev. Stephanie Spellers back to lead workshops on Radical Welcome. This follows our Diocesan Convention theme of "Reflecting the Radical Welcome of Jesus by Being a Church for Others." Stephanie is an engaging speaker and one who speaks from experience about the journey to become a more welcoming people of God. The location in our region is the **Church of the Holy Family, in Chapel Hill**, on Saturday, **April 2**, from 10 a.m. till 3 p.m. Use the web link to get more information and to register. Signing up for the Chapel Hill event by March 26 means the cost is only \$10. The same workshop is being offered at **Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Southern Pines** Saturday, **March 19**. Sign up by March 12 for the \$10 cost. Scholarships are available – contact Jim Melnyk if you'd like to attend but need assistance with the fee. <http://www.episdioncschool.org/article257435c4273932.htm>

February Vestry Highlights

The St. Paul's Vestry met on February 22 at which time we

- Heard a report on the need for a video license for proposed movie nights at St. Paul's
- Received an update on the ongoing reconciliation process (see article)
- Had further discussion on the possibility of renting the Rectory
- Received the Jr. Warden's report that included information on our new copier, our beginning to receive estimates on much needed building maintenance and the plan to apply for a Diocesan Green Grant to help with some of the repairs
- Finalized Vestry Liaison assignments for Parish Committees
- Discussed the upcoming program for Wednesdays in Lent (see Sign Up for Wednesdays in Lent)
- Finalized plans to meet with Canons Hunn and Weigert on March 2 to hear plans for upcoming workshops

Identified the need for someone to chair the Ham and Yam festival and a Vestry Liaison for the group. Also heard about youth plans to highlight NetsforLife at the festival.

MOVING INTO LENT...

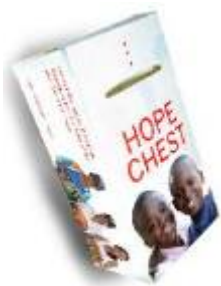
The Brotherhood of St. Andrew Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Bring your appetites! The Brotherhood of St. Andrew holds its Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper this Tuesday, March 8, at 6:00 pm. Everyone is invited. The Brotherhood and helpers will serve hot pancakes and sausage to parishioners and friends at their seats. We will take a love offering. See the signup sheets on the bulletin board near Lawrence Hal to list your name and number of family members/friends who will attend.

Lenten Resources from Episcopal Relief & Development

At the 2009 General Convention, Lent was officially designated as a time to encourage dioceses, congregations and individuals to remember and support the life-saving work of Episcopal Relief & Development. We invite all Episcopalians to join together on March 13, and throughout the Lenten season, to pray for those living in need.

The booklet *2001 Lenten Meditations* compiled by ER&D will be available in the Narthex of the Church and outside Lawrence Hall beginning March 6. Please consider taking a copy to use in your homes throughout the Lenten season.



We will also have Hope Chests available for our children and youth Sunday School children to take home and use during the Lenten season (many of us remember the name "Mite Boxes" from our growing up). The Hope Chest is a hands-on way for children, individuals and families to help those who are suffering through an offering to Episcopal Relief & Development. Any boxes not taken by our children and youth will be available for grownups to take and fill during the season.

Boxes will be collected and blessed at the end of Lent and the funds received forwarded to ER&D. Look for other ways to support ER&D throughout Lent.

Ash Wednesday March 9

7:00 pm Service



Ash Wednesday is one of two Fast Days recognized in the Episcopal Church, the other being Good Friday. We mark the Fast of Ash Wednesday at **7 pm on March 9** with a celebration of the Holy Eucharist and the imposition of ashes.

After the opening collect for Ash Wednesday we are invited by the priest to the observance of a holy Lent. We are reminded that Lent is meant to be a time of preparation as we approach the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection. We are called to a time of self-examination and repentance; to prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and to time spent reading and meditating of God's holy Word (BCP, p. 265).

Though the season is penitential it is not as much about our need for forgiveness and amendment of life as it is about God's gracious and forgiving love. In the midst of our struggles to be faithful to God and loving and caring toward our neighbors, God's steadfast love and mercy call us to newness of life. Repentance and reconciliation are about turning from preoccupation with self back toward God, so that we might celebrate the Paschal Feast with great joy and thanksgiving.

For a season our Alleluias will lay hidden in our hearts, yet even as we go down to the dust, even as we stand face-to-face with the cross on Good Friday we live with the promise that we shall ever make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Junior Warden's Spring Workday

Saturday, March 26

9:00 am (Breakfast—8:30 am)

Join us on Saturday, March 26 for general building clean-up, yard work and Job Jar jobs that haven't been completed! Please bring yard tools if you have them: rakes, gloves, pruners, etc.

There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board outside Lawrence Hall. If you have questions, please call Mike Weathers at (H) 553-5738 or © 931-2477.

Got a Few Minutes?

It is amazing how much parish-wide communication takes place via email these days. It seems so much easier to tap out a message or a response on the keyboard than picking up the phone or setting up a meeting. Yet there is a richness to hearing the human voice with all its inflection or seeing a person face-to-face, "hearing" their body language, or experiencing a hug, a handshake, or a gentle touch in the midst of prayer.

My contact information is in the bulletin each Sunday – how to reach me via phone or email. Sometimes I tend to take it for granted that members of St. Paul's will call or email me if they need or want to get together, but perhaps it's important to extend an invitation from time-to-time just to remind you I'm here and available when you need or want to talk.

That said, give me a call sometime. I can come to your home for a visit. I can even do a house blessing if you'd like. Another option is to set up a time to come by the church and meet if you'd like. Give me a call and we'll set something up. I also enjoy the chance to share a meal, so give me a call if your preferred venue to talk would be over lunch or even dinner. If you are ill or facing surgery, I want to be present for you.

I realize that life can be fairly hectic for all of us. And I've lost track over the years of the number of times I've heard people say, "Well, clergy are so busy, I don't want to bother them." But the truth is, I've been called to St. Paul's as a pastor and spiritual companion along the way, not just a preacher or administrator for the church. So, give me a call and set up some time together. Come in for a visit, or invite me over for an hour or so to talk. Or, let's simply get together to break bread with one another and enjoy each other's company.

Blessings, Jim+

Are you ready to change your mind?

I'm not just talking about changing a position or opinion but changing your beliefs, faith and possibility your spirituality or the way you think. I'm talking about EFM—Education For Ministry. Not ordained ministry, just your personal ministry as a Christian in this congregation and beyond. "What goes on?" is a fair question.

EFM is a four-year study undertaken one year at a time. You will examine parts of the Old Testament (Year One) and New Testament (Year Two) at a depth you have never done before. You will study the history of, and influences on, the Christian Church (Years Three and Four) from the perspectives of Theologians, Philosophers, and Bible and Church Historians; people who have devoted their lives to the study of these subjects. They will challenge your perceptions and strengthen your understanding of who we are as Christians, where we came from, and how we arrived where we are now.

EFM is arduous. It takes time and effort to read and understand the assignments, then participate in the seminar (yes, we discuss the readings and our personal beliefs). Finally, we take time on a regular basis learning to think theologically by actively using several methods of reflecting theologically.

Are you ready to be challenged; to grow in your faith and find or refine your personal ministry? If you're not sure, talk to Fr. Jim, a member of EFM or either of this year's mentors: Jane and Dick Hawk. Meetings start again in September. Are you ready to change your mind?

MITCHELL MOMENTS MARCH 2011

March looks like a month that might be arriving like a lion, but then again, it could enter like a lamb. I know this is not definitive, but my thoughts couldn't be any more correct than the two groundhog predictions we had recently. Time will tell.

Time is getting to be a very important word that we hear in so many ways like: time marches on, there was a time, need more time, take time, and, what time is it, to name a few. Time seems to be intangible and elusive, but it's something that is cherished. Are we using time to our advantage? Each of us has our daily activities, and it seems like the day is over before you know it. Just before dropping off to sleep, you think to yourself, where did the time go? and what exactly did I do with my time today?

In EFM, Education for Ministry, one of our tasks has been to take time or add time (however you want to say it) for God. This has been a struggle for all of us in the group for many reasons, however, we continue to work on it. Speaking for me, I have found that when I give God time at the beginning of the day, it is powerful. God's time could be reading Scripture, reading **Forward Day by Day** with reflection, sitting in silence with my thoughts focused on God, watching the sun rise or just praying. I encourage you to join me in giving God time by taking 3-5 minutes each day for a week. If you are already doing something like this, try adding a little more time.

The Lenten Season is quickly approaching. This may be a wonderful time to reflect on what each of us is doing with our time as we discern our ministry here at St. Paul's, the surrounding community and the world. Let's try to make time count for something other than a fleeting moment.

Thoughts:

So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest-time, if we do not give up. Galatians 5:25-6:10

The best time to do a thing is when it can be done. William Pickens

Thank you for all that you do here at St. Paul's Episcopal Church to help plan our work and work our plan. Should you have questions/concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at lagmitchell@bellsouth.net or 1-919-840-8650.

Faithfully, Lagratta Mitchell, Senior Warden

Prayer List

You may have noticed that our weekly prayer list has quite a few names these days. While it is a good thing that we offer prayers for the people of God, sometimes we forget to the Church Office know when it is time for someone to come off the prayer list. Please take a few extra minutes the next time you see the weekly list and let us know if there is anyone whose name can come off. As always, please let us know if you have anyone who needs to be added to the prayer list as well.

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing...(1 Thessalonians 5:16).

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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SPRING FORWARD!

Daylight Savings Time
starts Sunday, March 13.

Set your clocks ahead
one hour on Saturday
night March 12, so you
will be on time for
church!



St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Sunday Schedule

Holy Eucharist	8:00 am
Choir Rehearsal	9:30 am
Christian Formation	10:00 am
Choral Eucharist	11:00 am