

THE EPISTLE

A PUBLICATION OF ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH | MAY - JUNE 2007

From the Rector

All things new...

There is work to be done! God calls us at this time and this place to be about the busy-ness of being in community and inviting others to join the sacred dance between us and God. As a community centered and grounded in the ministry of Christ we hold that no one can be a Christian alone. Empowered by the energy of God's love in Christ we believe we can do things that help make a difference in our own lives, in the lives of others in our community and in the lives of individuals and institutions beyond our walls.

It is with that in mind that I challenge you to find at least one new way to get involved at St. Paul's. Sing. Worship. Welcome new people. Lead a small group. Pray. Provide food. Work to bring healing. Work to bring justice. Work for peace. Pastor another. Reach out beyond the parish, to share your passion, care and conviction with the whole community.

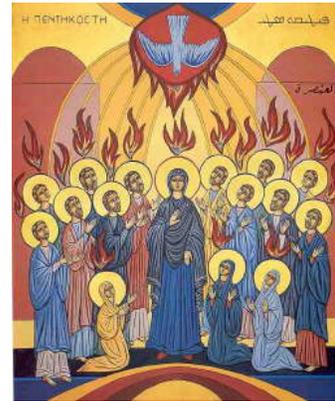
There are many opportunities for ministry here at St. Paul's and each of these ministries are open to all. When you discover a ministry you think might be a match for you, get in touch with the contact person, a vestry person or me. Ask them to tell you about their stories and work of their ministry. Tell them your story and your dreams for your life and the life of the world.

If you discover there is a longing and calling for a new ministry, I encourage you to share it with others in the community, chances are they have the same longing and call. It is through members of this community that new ministries are formed and old ministries renewed.

No one has ever brought quite the gifts that you bring to God's work of justice and all-embracing love. With your help, God's work of hope can flourish in this parish, in the world and in you, in new and wondrous ways.

Fr. Deon+

Pentecost 2007



VENI, Creator Spiritus, mentes tuorum visita, imple superna gratia quae tu creasti pectora.



Come, Holy Spirit, Creator blest, and in our souls take up your rest; come with your grace and heavenly aid to fill the hearts which you have made.

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May 27th 2007
Pentecost Sunday!!



Come celebrate the
Coming of the Holy Spirit
&
the Birth of the Church

St. Paul's will celebrate with sights and sounds what it means to be set on fire with the renewing and creating power of the Holy Spirit.

Bring the whole family as we celebrate the work of the Holy Spirit.

Please plan on wearing Red on that day.

WHAT IS PENTECOST?

The Day of Pentecost is the occasion on which pious Jews from all over the new Christian world gathered to celebrate "The Feast of Weeks," probably just months after the crucifixion of Jesus. That Feast was a Jewish festival (all of the first Christians were also Jews) at which first fruits were offered to God. On this day, a miracle occurred: tongues of flame lighted on each person...AND each person spoke their own native tongue but, miraculously, everybody understood everybody else!

The difference it all makes in my life is that on this same day the promised gift of the Holy Spirit was given to the Church (the small Christian faith). I believe that it is that force, the Holy Spirit, that has powered the Church all these two thousand years, kept it going, fed us, strengthened us, supernaturally. Many, in fact, think of Pentecost as the "birth day" of the Church, because it was on that day that we received the gift that has made it all possible.

--William A. Kolb



Rotation Sunday School Returns to St. Paul's

Beginning the Sunday after Labor Day all church school classes will meet at 9:30 AM (between the services). This will give the children the opportunity to attend throughout the normal services, and will give them a better foundation in their Episcopal church.

Rotation Model



The Rotational Model is based on the multi-intelligence method of learning.

Part of the Rotational Model plan is that the school rooms will be dedicated to certain types of curriculum. One room will become the children's spiritual retreat space, while another will be set for crafts and creativity. Rooms are decorated to make the most out of the spaces available to us, but also to give the children the feeling that they are an important part of the church community. Without the children, our religion as we know it will slowly fade away, and we should not allow that to happen.

Parent Participation

We would like to encourage parents to be fully involved in Sunday School. As we launch the Rotation Model Sunday School, we will need parent volunteers throughout the summer to help prepare the classrooms for Fall.

I would like to leave you with one final note. For Sunday school to succeed we need your commitment as parents and guardians of the children of this parish to bring your children to church on a regular basis. Our children need to know that church is at least as important as all the other extra-curricular activities they have available to them.

If you have any questions at this time, please feel free to contact Phil Smith, Fr. Deon or one of the Sunday School Teachers. We are looking forward to meeting with you and discussing this wonderful program.

Phil

Parent Information Sessions

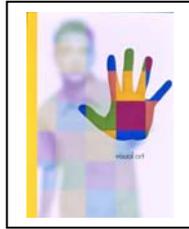
As part of the preparation for the Rotation Model Sunday School we invite all parents and those interested in teaching or shepherding to be a part of our planned information sessions.

Join us either on

**May 20 & June 3, 2007
@ Noon**

To learn more about Sunday School and how you can make a difference in the lives of our young people.

See you there!



Brighton Art Fair

August 11 & 12th 2007

Even though the Art Fair is months away, the Art Fair Team has begun the process of organizing and planning for our raffle. This year we have selected several items to create interest and excitement for purchasers. We need your help! Would you be interested in funding an i-tunes gift card in the amount of \$50? How about the idea of several persons donating with the end result being \$50? For Sixty dollars you can purchase a year's membership to Netflix for movie rentals. Again, a donation is necessary or the combination of several donations. Does anyone have major sport event tickets for later this year that they would be willing to donate to the raffle? These items will require a combined effort from the members of St. Paul's but the result will ultimately benefit our parish and those we reach out too.

We would appreciate any donations of gently-used jewelry, knick knacks, sewing notions, such as buttons, rick-rack etc. There is a box in the entryway to the chair of the sanctuary.

Again the Art Fair Team is asking for assistance from EVERYONE. In a few weeks we will have designated areas assigned for your generous donations and opportunities to volunteer to sell raffle tickets. Our plan

this year is to have volunteers be a part of the Brighton Farmers Market and sell raffle tickets from 10:00am to 12:00am. With your help we can make this the best Art Fair ever!



Opportunities Available

Skyline Summer Camp in Almont has many different camp programs available for students from 2nd through 12th grades. If you are interested in seeing what they have to offer, contact Phil Smith for one of their brochures.



SAVE THE DATE SUNDAY, JUNE 24

It's our turn to cook and serve at the Crossroads Soup Kitchen in Detroit on Sunday, June 24. We anticipate serving 800 meals and preparing 1600 sandwiches. We will need a minimum of 16 volunteers to prepare and set up the food from 8:30 -12:00, and another 16 to serve and clean up from 11:15-3:45.

In the past this has been quite a fulfilling experience and we invite everyone to take advantage of this enriching opportunity. Watch for a sign up sheet coming soon.

Parish-Wide Trip to see the Lansing Lugnuts

We have the date of Friday, July 13th as the day we will travel up to Lansing to see the Lugnuts play baseball. The day will begin with all of the children of the parish gathering at the church for some fun and games, lunch, and a mini Summer Bible school program. Later in the day the adults will arrive and we will carpool up to the game. We expect this to be a wonderful evening of fellowship for our whole parish family. Stay tuned for more information to follow next month.

Tongues of Fire Brunch



This year we will celebrate Pentecost after the 10:30 service on **May 27th** with a "Hot" brunch. Bring a hot dish, hot drinks and anything else you would like to share with your fellow parishioners.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the church hall.

Recognition Sunday

May 20th during the 10:30 service we will have a recognition ceremony for all the children and youth who attended Sunday school this past year. We will also recognize the teachers for the fine job they did bringing the Christian faith to our young people.



Last Day of the Program year

May 20th will mark the last day for Sunday school for this year. Please mark your calendars.



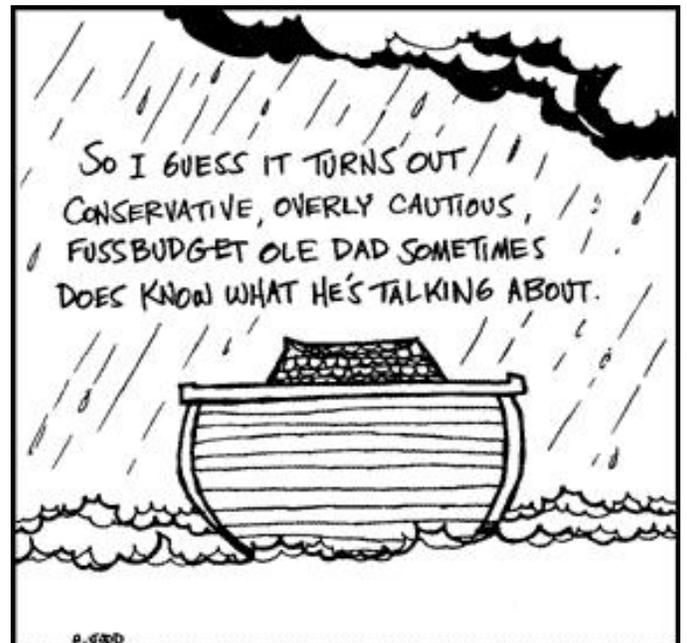
Family Fun Festival
Sunday May 20th 2007 @ Noon

Games Prizes Activities

Kid Friendly Lunches & Games

Come & Enjoy this **FREE** family Event with fun for all ages. There is a small charge for food.

Sponsored by the Daughters of the King



Pentecost Church Decorating & Games Night

On Sat. **May 26th** we will meet at 6:00PM to decorate the church for Pentecost. Bring a dish to share, for afterwards we will have dinner together and then play some games. The sign-up sheet will be posted in the church hall.



SUMMER WORSHIP

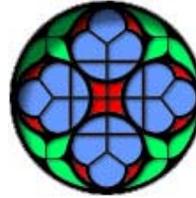
This Summer we will continue to have worship at our normal times 8:30am & 10:30am. See you in Church!

A Jumble Sale

Friday, June 1 and Saturday, June 2

We will be having a church Jumble Sale (Rummage Sale) the first weekend in June. We will be accepting household goods, gently-used children's clothing and new adult clothing items (with tags still attached) for our boutique corner. Parishioners may begin bringing rummage items on Sunday, May 27. **Please do not bring items before that date.**

WHERE IS GOD CALLING ST. PAUL'S ?

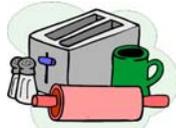


CONGREGATIONAL ASSESSMENT TEAM

The Vestry and Rector has convened a Congregational Assessment Team. They have appointed Suzanne Conerway and Hugh Munce to coordinate this team. Members include Bob Chenoweth, Wende Cofield, Sanjay Khunger, Jon Paggett and Janet Thurston.

The newly formed Congregational Assessment Team will facilitate exploration of St. Paul's identity, resources and ministry. An assessment of various committees and plans throughout the year will provide an opportunity to engage the entire parish in an open dialogue to explore where we are and where we plan to go in the future.

This assessment will conclude with a written report submitted to the Rector and Vestry, and to the entire St. Paul's congregation at the 2008 Annual Parish Meeting. Once your recommendations are shared with the team, it is anticipated that our parish will be able to continue to "grow, give, and serve in all ways in Christ."



Church Kitchen Shower

Thank you to all who donated gifts for our church kitchen; we got everything on our wish list. We now have beautiful towels, potholders and dishrags, some new pans, carafes, small appliances, knives, cookie sheets and much more. Thank you so much for supporting our kitchen shower project.

- The Daughters of the King

Cancer Relay for Life

The Brighton Cancer Relay for Life is coming! It will be held Friday, May 18 - Saturday, May 19, 7:00 PM - 7:00 PM at the Brighton High School track. David Beidler and Edmund Senkowski are acting as team captains for the event. You may walk at the relay, sponsor a walker, make a donation or buy luminaria; it all helps to finding a cure for this life-changing disease. If you have questions regarding the Relay, please contact David or Edmund.

Why does God let bad things happen in the world?

This question is probably as old as religion itself. It is a stumbling block for some of us, and for many more at given moments of tragedy. There are as many answers to this question as there are people who care to engage in theological dialogue. One understanding is that yes, God allows "bad" things to happen; God does not cause them to happen.



Most "bad" things which happen do so because God gives a radical freedom to God's people; we are free people, not puppets on a string. **But God does not cause "bad" things to happen. God loves us and grieves with us in our pain when "bad things" happen.**

Therefore, we might best respond by saying that God does not Will "bad" things to happen in life. Rather, "bad" things happen in the freedom that comes with the gift of life. When "bad" things happen to any of God's children, God is grieved and suffers with us, experienced most vividly in the hurt and suffering of Jesus the Christ for all humanity. Any "bad" thing which happens is never the last word. Rather, God is the deepest and last word, and that word is love and eternal life with God.

--The Rev. Dr. Douglass M. Bailey

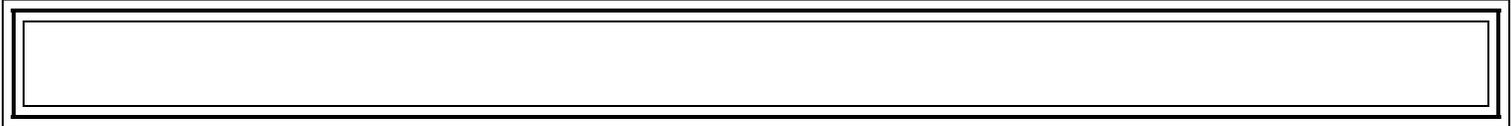


Reading the Bible Literally??

A word about taking the bible literally, it is impossible for two reasons. First, **the English translations preachers claim to be the literal word of God, are not always true to the original language of the Bible, Hebrew.** All translations are really interpretations, and there are over 400 biblical words known as hapax legomena, whose English translation we don't know. The English you read is a best guess. The second reason why biblical literalism is impossible is because no one takes the entire bible literally. Serpent handling Pentecostal Christians in Appalachia come closest to following the words of Jesus literally in Mark 16. Perhaps you are aware of people who advocate self-mutilation in obedience to Jesus' words in Mark 9. I'm not. And if we were to execute children who insult their parents as is written in Deuteronomy 21, we'd all be dead.



--Rabbi Micah Greenstein
from the sermon "Religion Without Humor Is Blasphemy"



QUOTES TO REMEMBER...

"The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose, but mosquitoes and sand gnats come close!"

"God doesn't call the qualified; He qualifies the called."

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