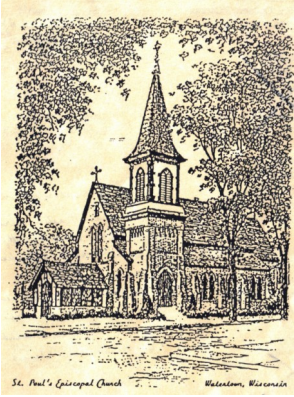


January - February 2012



A Publication of St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Watertown, WI 53094

The Epistle

Special points of interest:

- Fellowship and Table talk
- Church Calendar
- Poem by Alice Mirk



A Final message from our Priest - by Fr. Mark Moore



Isaiah 65:

- ¹⁷ For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.
- ¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice for ever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight.
- ¹⁹ I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and delight in my people;

Inside this issue:

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Pastor's message | 1-2 |
| Tortoise and Hare | 3 |
| Money Matters | 4 |
| What's Next ? | 5 |
| Kids Korner | 8 |
| Mary's Room | 8 |

Yesterday morning I stumbled across this passage from Isaiah. It is one of the most hopeful, upbeat and joyous passages in scripture. It was written at the end of the exile when the Jewish leadership was still captive in Babylon but they knew their captivity was almost over and would be heading back to Jerusalem. And many of them I'm sure were feeling very despondent about their future. After all, the temple had been destroyed, and much of their home town with it. The prospect of "going home" was not all that pretty. The task before them was monumental and many of them had grown comfortable in their new homes. Others had never known a life outside of Babylon. So for many, the return to Jerusalem and the restoration of the temple was an unwanted and frightening change.



Final message - continued

St. Paul's is also at the point of another change and that means fear, anxiety, and leaves many of you questioning the future of the church. Making a change is never easy, but you have done it many times in the past, and so many times with great success. I think that over the past five years we have been very successful in many ways. Think about just a few accomplishments. First our attendance has more than doubled, and giving with it. Although we are not solvent yet, we are much better off than in the past and we are heading in the right direction. The building has been so much more than restored. We have set aside space for our youth to play, turned the Sweenie room into a multipurpose room that not only serves St. Paul's, in a variety of ways, but the community around us as well. Our entrance way has been rearranged and new windows put in to make it more inviting and welcoming to visitors. Our worship space has had wonderful decorations for every season that help tell those who come something about our church calendar and our faith. Our organist and choir have done such wonderful work to enhance our worship and liven our faith. And that faith is lived out in a wonderful variety of ministries ranging from feeding hungry people and putting diapers on their babies, to hosting ecumenical meditation/prayer sessions and inviting the community to share our faith.

There are many more examples that would show how St. Paul's has grown and changed in the past, but the greatest change has been in welcoming others into the parish family. Numerous people have come to me to tell me how welcomed they felt and that they were part of something bigger even if they didn't understand it. There is a spirit of life here, a spirit of generosity, faith, love and hope. And it is that spirit that will carry St. Paul's on to new and greater ministries and challenges.

We all know that change is inevitable, even if we don't like it and find it fearful. But like those Jews of the exile 2500 years ago, you are now asked to go someplace you don't want to go. You have new challenges to face. It might seem daunting at times and it might bring you great anxiety. But if we just remember this lesson from Isaiah that God is bring us to a new heaven and a new earth. God is leading us to a place so wonderful that we will not even remember our past, then perhaps it will be easier to see these changes as a blessing, and like all blessings, we are grateful for them.

For me this passage is particularly relevant since I am moving on to a new and different life in almost every way. And although I am looking forward to my new ministry at St. Thomas of Canterbury, I am sad to be leaving St. Paul's. This parish has been a continual source of joy and love for me. Your support and compassion have strengthened me to live with, and better understand, the personal challenges of the past few years. You are a gifted, giving and loving parish that will always have a special place in my heart. Your willingness to share, change, welcome and love has been my guide these past five years. And I have learned to love each of you. And that has made leaving St. Paul's one of the toughest decisions of my life. It has been hard to hear God's calling and respond in faith, "here I am lord, send me!" when I really didn't want to go. I didn't want to make the change. But I go in faith, knowing that for all of us, God is creating that new heaven and a new earth, a place of great joy where we are God's delight. I go confident in your future and that the spirit will guide you. I go knowing that I will always carry you with me, and I will always be with you.

Peace always,

Fr. Mark

The Tortoise and the Hare - by Vicki Wright , Senior Warden



The Tortoise and The Hare

There once was a speedy hare who bragged about how fast he could run. Tired of hearing him boast, Slow and Steady, the tortoise, challenged him to a race. All the animals in the forest gathered to watch.

Hare ran down the road for a while and then paused to rest. He looked back at Slow and Steady and cried out, "How do you expect to win this race when you are walking along at your slow, slow pace?"

Hare stretched himself out alongside the road and fell asleep, thinking, "There is plenty of time to relax."

Slow and Steady walked and walked. He never, ever stopped until he came to the finish line. The animals who were watching cheered so loudly for Tortoise, they woke up Hare.

Hare stretched and yawned and began to run again, but it was too late. Tortoise was over the line. Slow and Steady won the race!"

As I pondered what I would write as my last senior warden article, I could not get the story of The Tortoise and The Hare out of my mind. I don't know who the Hare is but I certainly think that our parish of St. Paul's is the Tortoise. Slow and steady will win the race for the projected growth that we have been working for over the last five years. All you have to do is look around the church on a Sunday morning. We are becoming a strong and vibrant congregation that is LIVING OUT God's will as we are meant to do.

Of course, Fr. Mark moving on to another parish makes us all feel like someone is blocking our racecourse, but it is merely a little stubble along the way. Tortoises symbolize patience, resolve, persistence, and living a long, long life! That symbolism is certainly St. Paul's; especially our resolve to grow and our persistence in doing what is necessary to achieve that goal.

We will all miss Mark, but we have each other! At choir practice last week, we practiced a new song with the following words:

We are pilgrims on a journey.

We are travelers on the road.

We are here to help each other

Walk the mile and bear the load.

God has a plan for St. Paul's, an important part of which is helping others find their way. We just need to continue along the path he has set for us in our slow, steady, and persistent manner. Thanks to all of you for being my friend and helping me on my journey.

Money Matters - By Alice Mirk / Treasurer



Well, we did it! We got through 2011 and ended up in the black. Thanks to everyone who kept up with their pledges, who cared enough about the work of St Paul and the meaning of community to see it through!

2012 will bring new challenges. Walter and I have just celebrated our third Christmas Eve anniversary at St Paul's Church, when we wandered in just to try out the little brown church. That means we are entering our third year of attendance! We have never known the church without a responsive full time priest, the group of St Paul's women that could give Hercules a run for his money, or the group of solid St Paul's men who keep things working, doors opening, audits correct and art work quietly repaired.

As I enter the pledges for 2012 my hope is that we all stay that solid, our community as loving and friendly as ever as we get through the next few months. Hanging together in the guildhall, staying connected and communicating frequently about anything and everything will be the key. If you have any questions at all about your giving, or anything to do with the treasurer part of things don't hesitate to ask.

Please come to the annual meeting on the 29th where there will be a full financial report, and I hope to have all the giving statements out by the 20th of this month.

What's the Next Step?

There have been many questions out there about what will happen next for St. Paul's with Fr. Mark moving on to another parish. Never fear, plans have been made, so we can hit the ground running on February 5th.

Most importantly, we will have Fr. John Crosswaite as our supply priest starting February 5th through May and beyond if needed. Fr. Crosswaite comes to us highly recommended from Fort Atkinson, who was recently in the same situation we are right now. John is the administrator of a Kirkland Crossings retirement community in Pewaukee. So while he is not available to us during the daytime hours during the week, he is on the weekends. On Sundays he will do the 10'clock service, plus our Bible study at 9:00. He will also be available to talk with people either before or after the service on Sundays.

In the case of emergencies, we will have available Fr. Andy from Fort Atkinson and Watertown clergy. Names and contact numbers will be listed each week in our service bulletin.

The plan is also to continue with our mid week services. Wendy Wilke will conduct morning prayer on Wednesdays. Georgia Irre and Peter Wright will lead evening prayer on Wednesdays.

Ellen Shanks will continue to do her very capable work as our office administrator. She is in office from 8:00 to 4:00 or 5:00 every Friday and is able to work extra time if needed.

Change is not always easy. Sometimes change is like a trapeze, you have to let go to grab hold. I am confident that this will make us stronger as a parish and is all a part of the plan that God has for St. Paul's.

Vicki Wright

Senior Warden

MARK

He came to us after the Phoenix-fire

With more questions than answers.

Bringing the message of Christ

much in the manner

of his favorite-Paul.

Drawing richly from a life well lived

And variegated.

Solid in self,

Understanding of humanity and failure

That needed humor

As well as forgiveness.

He leaves us now

With more questions than answers.

That is how it should be.

A church without questions is a dead church,

Both within and without.

Alice Mirk

2012

Fellowship & Table Talk

We are blessed that “Fellowship and Table Talk” is a thriving and cheery part of our Sunday mornings at St. Paul’s.

We have the opportunity immediately following the 10:00 am service, to gather for light food with refreshments in the Guild Hall and offer hospitality to each other. This is especially important all year long when we have visitors. We are able to meet our new guests and introduce them to our friends. It is an easy and fun way to serve one another in Christ and in love.



Please consider getting several friends together to serve OR just sign up by yourself. Better yet consider serving in a small group. What makes this so easy is that you provide very modest food and juice! You set up, make the coffee and drinks, serve with food and clean up. You do a little bit before attending the service and then serve and clean up afterwards.

If you, your family or a group of friends would like to be a part of this important ministry, please sign up in Guild Hall.

*Making your way in the world today takes everything you've got,
Taking a break from all your worries sure would help a lot.
Wouldn't you like to get away?
Sometimes you want to go - where everybody knows your name
and they're always glad you came,
You wanna be where you can see - our troubles are all the same
You wanna be where everybody knows your name.
_____ Theme Song of the former SitCom “Cheers”*

The St. Paul’s Fellowship Hour is not exactly the old Cheers Bar scene but the serendipitous atmosphere with our Church’s convivial folks can also be your Sunday AM Christian fellowship delight as well, - fellowship at St. Paul’s is, “.... **where everybody knows your name and they're always glad you came**”.

Come for the Service - Stay for the Smiles!!

By: Paul Citerony





Sunday School starts up again January 8th 2012 and goes all the way to Palm Sunday.

We will be studying Advent events for the next couple of Sundays and then we will be dipping into the Golden Boxes of Christ's Parables. These are always a rich source of creative questions as we sort out the intent of the story and how it applies to our lives in school.

We keep the parables in Golden Boxes for that very reason, they are rich, rich in meaning, rich in content, and meaty stories that the kids can act out over and over again, each time seeing something new in the tale. Parables never get old, unlike the rest of us, maybe that's why they are my favorite too! See you there!



Mary's Room

Thank you so much everyone for bringing in the Advent gifts so generously for Mary's Room.

The brushes, diapers, baby wash, lotions and wipes are all very much appreciated. The stories we hear from these Mom's are truly amazing. The safety net is slowly disappearing for many of them and yet they are hanging tight to their dream.

Take the Mom with four children who is studying to be a nurse. She has a year to go in the technical college program. She is one of our regulars. We celebrate when she passes her algebra, we commiserate when she runs out of food stamps and has to make time to go to the food pantry. We listen to how hard Christmas was when her children got books and school supplies and they really wanted electronic toys. Her oldest child is 7, her youngest qualifies for Mary's Room. Her visit always lasts about 20 minutes as she decompresses and we tell her how life is going to be after that degree and what a wonderful example she is setting for her children as she works from dawn to dusk.

She tells us she does not know what she would do without Mary's Room and the free clothes, equipment and diapers she is able to get. In the next breath she is offering a tub full of boy's clothing to us that her two youngest are finished with and she is proud to donate. We arrange a pickup and exchange telephone numbers. Sharing, reciprocity, love for the children no matter what, this is Mary's Room.

New Fellowship Hour

In describing St. Paul's Episcopal Church, members and visitors could mention many things. They could say it is Spiritual. Diverse. Interesting. Challenging. Inspirational. More than anything else though, they can uniformly use one word to describe St. Paul's: Friendly.



When you visit St. Paul's, be sure to plan to stay for a while after the service for Fellowship Hour. Fellowship: That's spelled f-r-i-e-n-d-l-y.

St. Paul's Fellowship Hours are for OLD COMERS & NEW COMERS! Looking for a way to get more acquainted and learn of our parish community? Fellowship Hours are a great way to form new friendships and explore hospitality opportunities too. St. Paul's Fellowship Hours are hosted also to compliment our Sunday greeters and to help newcomers and "oldcomers" feel more at home. **Whether you are new to St. Paul's and interested in plugging in, or a long-time member eager to meet new folks, ALL ARE WELCOME!**



Come for the Service –

Stay for the Smiles!!



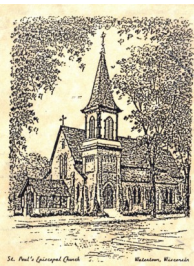
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|-----------|
| 1 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist | 2 | 3 1:00 PM Mary's Room | 4 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 5:30 PM Spirituality Class 7:00 PM Choir Practice | 5 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist | 6 10:00 AM Mary's Room | 7 |
| 8 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist | 9 6:30 PM Beginning Yoga | 10 1:00 PM Mary's Room | 11 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 5:30 PM Continuing Yoga 5:30 PM Spirituality Class 7:00 PM Choir Practice | 12 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist 7:00 PM Vestry Meeting | 13 9:00 AM Gentle Yoga 10:00 AM Mary's Room | 14 |
| 15 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist | 16 6:30 PM Beginning Yoga | 17 1:00 PM Mary's Room | 18 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 5:30 PM Continuing Yoga 5:30 PM Spirituality Class 7:00 PM Choir Practice | 19 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist | 20 9:00 AM Gentle Yoga 10:00 AM Mary's Room | 21 |
| 22 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist | 23 6:30 PM Beginning Yoga | 24 1:00 PM Mary's Room | 25 7:30 AM Morning Prayer 5:30 PM Continuing Yoga 5:30 PM Spirituality Class 7:00 PM Choir Practice | 26 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist | 27 9:00 AM Gentle Yoga 10:00 AM Mary's Room | 28 |
| 29 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist 11:00 AM Annual Meeting | 30 6:30 PM Beginning Yoga | 31 1:00 PM Mary's Room | | | | |



February

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|---|--|--|-----------|
| | | | 1 5:30 PM Continuing Yoga 5:30 PM Spirituality Class 7:00 PM Choir Practice | 2 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist | 3 9:00 AM Gentle Yoga 10:00 AM Mary's Room | 4 |
| 5 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist | 6 6:30 PM Beginning Yoga | 7 1:00 PM Mary's Room | 8 5:30 PM Continuing Yoga 5:30 PM Spirituality Class 7:00 PM Choir Practice | 9 6:30 PM Holy Eucharist 7:00 PM Vestry Meeting | 10 9:00 AM Gentle Yoga 10:00 AM Mary's Room | 11 |
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Saint Paul's Episcopal Church



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