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The Epistle

Celebrating Family, Community, God's Abundant Love For All

April/May 2017

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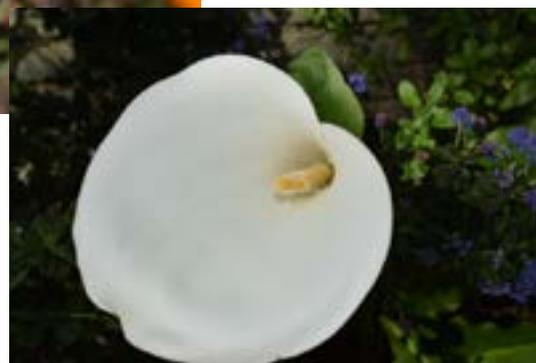
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From the Desk of Rev. Audrey

Dear Good People of St. Paul's,

In this edition of our Epistle I share with you some of my “techniques” for helping guide you through this transition process. I hope that you will find the information helpful and as always I encourage you to meet with me at any time for further discussion and dialogue. I also hope that you remember that this time of transition is one of discovery and hope as we look together into the bright future.

I will, and do, ask a LOT of questions. I endeavor to ask these questions without hint of “attitude” or “opinion” as I simply wish to hold up for review what it is that we are doing and then to further discover the why of it all. I have already shared with you the truth that I do not have within me the same historic DNA that many of you have about the way St. Paul's goes about her ministry. Like every good student if I don't know something I ask.

What I have found in my experience is that simply asking a question can bring about some anxiety and sometimes even defensiveness. What I know is that most of us can be suspicious of opinions masked as questions and questions masked as hostility. What I would like to offer is that in the midst of those questions and answers we find a new way of seeing who we are and whether or not who we are is in fact aligned with who we think we are.

I encourage you to not fear the questions or the answers as we explore more deeply where it is we find ourselves and chart out that path in search of a truth that will bring us closer to understanding ourselves best. The work in this process can be tough and I know it can be challenging as well. It is also rewarding and with that reward comes the benefit of deeper knowledge.

With that deeper knowledge St. Paul's will find herself in the perfect position to seek out and call a candidate who fits well. Like all successful relationships - it takes work. I am your biggest champion and will also be your biggest challenger in this process of discovery.

I pray for you each and ask that you pray for me as well.

Peace,
Audrey+



Vestry Selects Rector Search Committee

The Vestry had many qualified applicants for this ministry and their decision was made prayerfully and thoroughly. The members of the Parish selected by the Vestry to serve on the Rector Search Committee are: Lisa Bell Stewart, Susan Couch, Sheri Grosjean, Neal Logue, Sherry Mattern, Amy Tcheng, Mary Waddington, Laura Williams and Rhea Williams.

From the Desk of Rev. Jeff



Hey St. Paul's,

I laughed when I saw I wrote "Eucatastrophe" in the title of last year's Epistle around this time. While a great word coined by J.R.R. Tolkien, it's not easy to understand, much like how the story of Holy Week could be considered Good News.

"Good news in the midst of great tragedy:" that's what that word means. As violence erupts around the world, hate and fear are strong and understandable temptations. As we hear bitter arguments and scandals at our nation's capitol, we see the mirror of the Roman society that crucified the one we call the Christ. As one side slings mud at the other side, we see the same divisions that brought schisms in Judaism and Jesus' followers so soon after his death. What good news could possibly be brought out of this mess? What does Holy Week have to teach us about this?

Grace leads us through the hard, dark journey with Jesus. We are again confronted with the price we pay when a life of love confronts the face of hate and fear: crucifixion. It is only after embracing the courage, suffering, and death at the hands of hate and fear, that we are truly able to embrace the joy and brilliance of Easter. This is the tall order grace requires; this is the tall order grace enables us to achieve. The key? We do it in relationship, not alone. This is the point of Holy Week, and I hope you are able to take that journey with us.

Palm Sunday recalls the day when many people of Israel were heralding their much awaited king to bring liberty and justice for all, re-establishing God's kingdom in Jerusalem. Instead of a Roman war horse symbolizing victory through war, Jesus rode a donkey, symbolizing peaceful victory. What does this teach us about God's Kingdom?

Wednesday night we sit in simple, musical meditation from the house of prayers for world peace in Taizé, France. The basis for this meditation is the dignity of every human being, recalling our Baptismal Covenant. The message of Jesus is simple; it is not easy.

Maundy Thursday we re-member the first Eucharist. Washing one another's feet as Jesus did for his followers shows the intimate vulnerability service requires. Stripping the altar points to the stark, naked reality that Friday brings after the betrayal of Jesus.

Good Friday shows what violent politics, intolerance, corruption and misunderstandings cost us all. Jesus undergoes execution by those who achieve "peace" through violence and fear. This "second class" citizen is made an example to those who seek to have their God-given dignity recognized. We sit with the loss and despair the apostles felt that day.

Holy Saturday, join me in going to St. Gregory's Episcopal Church in San Francisco to attend their exceptional Great Vigil of Easter. What's it like to wait in the darkness of the day after the crucifixion? What's it like to suddenly be brought into the light of the resurrected Christ? Wear comfy shoes, and bring a jacket and come and see what it's all about! We'll leave St. Paul's at 5:45p.m. as seats fill up quickly!

Easter Sunday we have the 7:30a.m. service, honoring the sunrise at which the Son rose, followed by a delectable coffee hour, with a discussion of the meaning of Easter in the Livingston Conference Room from 9-10a.m. for those interested. Our 10:30a.m. service will include a children's sermon and feature our brass section! Then head over to "St. Paul's East" (the Mortons' home) for their annual lunch party with an Easter egg hunt, bountiful spread of food, and wonderful fellowship. Bring a friend; bring a visitor!

Rev. Jeff

Reflections

Honduras Mission 2017

We are blessed at St. Paul's with many opportunities to do God's work in the world. One of the greatest blessings is our ability to travel and work in Honduras with the congregation of San Juan Evangelista Episcopal Church. We do this because our former rector opened this door for us. During the many trips we've made, we helped with various building projects, we've painted and we even helped them build a jungle gym. Every year we work with the children and youth of the parish at what we call Vacation Bible School. But that is not what we really do while we are visiting with Esmeralda, Maritza, Oscar, Toño, Maynor, the late Chepe, Diego and the other friends we have there.

Rev. Sylvia constantly reminded us that our goal is not the construction projects we complete (as we never really complete one – they do that) or the back packs we fill, but our real mission is to build relationships. Every year when we arrive the kids come to us with big hugs, greeting us back to their parish, asking us to play with them. The adults show us their new babies or family photos and we hear their stories of the past year. But this year they reached out to us in a new way, one which we never expected.

During our stay, their Bishop visited the parish to perform Confirmations and Receptions into the church. This was exciting for us because most of us had never met Bishop Lloyd Allen. But the real surprise was that two of the young people to be confirmed asked specific members of St. Paul's to be their *Padrinos* (sponsors). That is how well they think of us-well enough to be their *Padrinos* for this event. And it was the young teens who asked, not their parents. What greater proof is needed that we have been successful at relationship building?

God has created a world of beauty, a world filled with light, life and love. The relationships we've built in Honduras reinforce our understanding of this world, to know that we truly share one bread and one cup.

Next January we will again share one bread and one cup with our friends at Iglesia Episcopal San Juan Evangelista. It is 10 months away so you don't have to decide tomorrow, but think about joining us. And don't forget to bring your relationship brick to continue the building.

Hugh Harvey

Agging Well

What is Centering Prayer?

Be still, and know that I am God. Psalm 46:10

Have you ever seen people in quiet contemplative prayer and wondered how can anyone be that still? How is it possible, especially with 24 hours of news every day, with email, social media or television constantly keeping our minds in high speed? Busy, busy, busy. Through contemplative prayer, we try to put all that away and focus on being still and in mindful relationship with God. But when are our brains that still?

Try it yourself. Find a quiet place and focus on clearing your mind, sit comfortably, letting your mind just 'be'. Of course, almost at once, thoughts will come to mind. What are you going to do about a difficult situation? Or what will you plan for dinner? Notice those thoughts but just let them go without worry. It takes time and work to be able to do that but be patient with yourself. Centering prayer is simply resting in God beyond your own thoughts, words and emotions. It means setting the time to do that on a regular basis. Start with time for prayer as you can manage and work up to longer sessions.

Contemplative prayer is both a method to be in relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. At St. Paul's Centering group, we used the book *Open Mind, Open Heart: The Contemplative Dimension of the Gospel* by Thomas Keating, one of the architects of Centering prayer, as our first source for the history and practice of Centering. Interestingly, the roots of Centering Prayer or contemplative prayer trace back to the Desert Fathers, to works like "The Cloud of Unknowing" written in Middle English in the latter half of the 14th century, the writings of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross. Contemplative prayer does not replace other prayer but encourages silence and deeper connection to God.

A short guide to the practice of Centering prayer, step by step:

1. Choose a sacred word as a symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action; a word, or a line of scripture, something meaningful to you.
2. Sit comfortably, with eyes closed, settle your body. Then briefly and silently introduce your sacred word.
3. When your thoughts of concern or worry come, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.
4. At the end of the period of prayer, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

For more information:

<http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/>

http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/private/32977/field-file/method_cp_eng-2016-06_0.pdf

Glenn Shockley

Dwight Stone directs



Sean Potts on drums.



Rev. Jeff "Jack of all trades" playing hand percussion and guitar.

Spirit

Service
Fun!!!



The Choir completes the Spirit Band



The true Spirit of the Service:
All are involved.



Fun for the whole family.



The Sprirt continues....

Musical Notes



It's been a bit of a whirlwind as the season of Epiphany whisked by. Some highlights during that time include the Choir, as always outdoing themselves whether a cappella around the baptismal font, or joining the Spirit Band for a service in the round. Our music was enhanced by solo offerings such as Jonathan Anderson on French Horn performing "A Mighty Fortress", and Louis Polcin performing Dwight Stone's "Erdwärts" on alto saxophone. Zoe Tcheng has spiced up our services on several occasions, and her string quartet, The Classical Strings Project, will be featured on April 2nd. Marina Tolstova continues to grace our services with solos and duets.

The Spirit Service in February featured "Deep River" (solo by Zoe Tcheng on violin); "My Sweet Lord" (Dwight Stone solo with Choir); and the U-2 hit "One" with Rev. Jeff Dodge. Our next Spirit Service will be April 30th.

We are currently busy preparing for Easter. The Choir is tackling some special anthems, and we look forward to having St. Paul's Brass Ensemble with us.

Concerts abound, and St. Paul's Concert Series is growing! In January "The Improv Concert II" wowed us, especially the encores! In February the Konevets Quartet appeared (with soprano Marina Tolstova), and virtuoso pianist Markus Pawlik with his string ensemble. In March Markus performed solo piano masterworks: ponderous Beethoven sonatas, and the mesmerizing Schumann Fantasie. All of these performances were of exceptional quality. Keep your ears out for WAVE (Women's Antique Vocal Ensemble), pianist Lino Rivera, the St. Petersburg Men's Ensemble, and other musical offerings before summer.

Dwight Stone

St. Paul's Youth

Where else can you find lots of people of three generations or more hanging out together?!

One of the wonderful things about a church, and Saint Paul's in particular, is the opportunity for kids, teens and adults of many generations and families to hang out together. I had such a good time at Shrove Tuesday's supper listening to Saint Paul's people of different generations share stories about high school debate competitions, the differences between a brother and sister, and watching a grandma encourage her granddaughter to crawl her way over to greet her.

What a profound impact intergenerational interactions, and particularly the parent-child relationship, have on our spirituality! When I was growing up I was sometimes in awe of my dad, sometimes resentful and sometimes afraid. I've noticed some of the same reactions in my relationship with God as well. Over time the work I've done to grow closer to my dad as he actually is, as opposed to my ideas and projections about him, has made me able to mature in my relationship with God.

For 2017 Rev. Jeff, Mariko Sturgess, Rev. Audrey and I have brainstormed about what the next chapter of ministry with kids and teens might look like and we're excited about the possibility of expanding the intergenerational ministry Saint Paul's is already doing. In particular we're looking to create opportunities for people of many generations to do some service work together as Saint Paul's already does so well. Stay tuned!

Summer Camps for Youth and Families

Middle School Immersion Trip

Citizens of the World – June 26-30

Overnight camp and service work opportunities for those graduating 6th-8th grade.

Based at All Soul's Church in Berkeley

Saint Paul's Family Camp – July 15-28

Relaxation, play and rejuvenation in the redwoods for the people of every generation.

High School Immersion Trip

Living Water – July 30–August 8

West Virginia Flood Relief for those graduating 9th-12th grade

Pre-trip meeting and registration deadline on April 23rd 2-4p.m. Contact Sean for more information.

Sean Potts

Your pledge money and what we're doing with it . . .

(Things you don't know about St. Paul's finances and didn't think to ask.)

In the last Epistle, I asked for your questions. Since I didn't get any, I feel free to write about whatever I want to. So, in this issue I am writing about our parking lot.

The parking lot - a mundane subject if ever there was one - is an important part of our life and lifeblood, because, without parking, who would come to church? We have very few parishioners who live within walking distance.

In the main parking lot across the street from the church (the one with the new crosswalk and crossing lights, oh boy!), we have 146 spaces. Four of them are designated for handicapped visitors. Of the others, we rent out about 30 spaces to commuters, a few to next-door neighbors and maybe 10 to downtown businesses. There is one commuter bus that hauls 25 people every day (Monday-Friday). Their company pay for them to park in the lot. These spaces are rented by the month.

Wait - there's more: During the day, many groups rent meeting space from us. Their attendees use the lot, and we don't expect rental money from them. Trinity Center operates every weekday and their staff and participants overflow into the main lot. In addition 13 condominiums are going to be built on the far side of our rental house (the one Rev. Jeff is living in). Beginning in a few months, the contractor will be renting 12 spaces for 18 to 24 months. This is a lucrative business!

But even with the money rolling in (!), policing the lot is a huge job, and we've not been able to get a handle on it. We continue to look for a reputable, conscientious company that will offer policing services on a reasonable basis, so far without success.

Here's a final note about parking: American Tow and St. Paul's have signed an agreement. American will provide signs advising scofflaws that they will be subject to towing. We will add our own signs letting people know how to rent spaces (and thus avoid the expense of redeeming towed vehicles).

Pete Banwell

Notes from the Vestry Retreat 2017

In February members of St. Paul's leadership team and clergy went on retreat to Bishop's Ranch to review the work begun in the Annual Meeting, and to plan for the year ahead.

On Friday afternoon we arrived and had the chance to meet and mingle with our 2017 vestry and clergy. We also had the pleasure of meeting Jeff Dodge's mom, Joy, and his dad, Richard. Once everyone arrived, safe and sound, we enjoyed dinner at a Mexican restaurant in Healdsburg to fuel our discussions for the rest of the evening.

After dinner Rev. Audrey facilitated a discussion on the impending rector transition, and how to be leaders during transition. There are four essential components of being a leader that we are focusing on and ask you to hold us accountable to. These are; 1) Define the reality as it is; not as it used to be, 2) Begin where you are, 3) Account for what has happened and 4) Know what our end goal is. We closed the evening with Compline.

Saturday after breakfast we reviewed comments from the Annual Meeting and determined that our strengths of ministry for 2016 were: Inclusiveness and Welcome, Women's Retreat, Honduras Mission, Trinity Center, and St. Paul's Commons. Rev. Audrey encouraged us to maintain a positive perspective so that, we, as a community, can build on what we are and attract superior candidates as we begin moving forward with the rector search. We also received our ministry assignments. (See Page 15 of the Epistle for the full listing.)

Later in the day we enjoyed a short break for reflection, refreshment and relaxation. We continued our work into the early evening, then joined vestries from St. John's, Ross, and Church of the Resurrection, Pleasant Hill for happy hour before our evening meal.

After two days of brainstorming and discussion of our current and future state and after worship in the chapel we concluded our business on Sunday.

In the months ahead we will continue to build on our ministry strengths. With a total of nine vestry members we should see an improved and more robust Stewardship Program. The Vestry will select the Rector Search Committee at the Vestry Meeting on March 20th. Communications will be at a premium as we enter fully into the rector search process that will be led by Sheri Grosjean. The Rector Search Team will be completely engaged as they conduct small group meetings, produce a Parish Profile and conduct all the required search activities. We will keep the parish informed of their progress.

This should be a very exciting year!

Jim Bell



Janice Foster and Leslie Dawson selling raffle tickets.



Raffle prizes galore.

Valentine Tea 2017



Carol and Elizabeth working hard..



Our emcee and pianist for the event, Pete Banwell.



"At your service ladies."



Winner of a raffle prize..



Rev. Jeff our auctioneer.

St. Paul's People Like to.....

Why I Enjoy Golf

Over 50 years ago, I was told hitting a little white ball is stupid. At the time I was just out of college and a newbie in a small town in southwestern Colorado. Golf became my outlet, something to do after work and on weekends. It was an excellent way to make new friends, develop camaraderie with workmates and feel a part of the community.

I have been fortunate to live and play in some fun places like Scotland, the home of golf, as well unique places like Nigeria where the small but round greens were actually made from sand and not grass. A smooth path had to be rolled out across the sand between your ball and the hole before putting. To this day, I vividly remember my four years living and playing golf in Nigeria. Socializing and networking centered very much on golf and was relaxing and fun.

In Scotland, we lived in a small town south of Aberdeen, with its golf course bordering the North Sea, full of wind, chill, fog, and rain that gives the North Sea its notoriety. I learned patience, resilience and humility fighting these conditions, but at the same time was awed by the beauty and splendor of rivers, streams, meadows and forests out of which many golf courses were laid out without re-shaping the land. Also, only walking and push carts were allowed.

I continue to enjoy golf 50 years later for all the same reasons. I still make new friends and play with old ones, like St. Paul's parishioners. And the young lady who thought years ago that hitting a little white ball was stupid also enjoys playing golf. That makes it a blast too.

If you would like more information on golf or golfing opportunities in this area contact me at 925-945-0715.

Walt Busenius



New Neighbors

Construction will soon start on a new condominium building up the street from St. Paul's. The project will create a building of 12, two bedroom units, called Trinity Heights Condominiums. It will be built on the two lots, 1950 and 1960 Trinity Ave., which are between Acalanes Apts. and Rev. Jeff's house.

Focus Reality/Lenox Homes are the builders. They have been cooperating with St. Paul's on plans to remove and realign fencing, replace trees, install irrigation, erect retaining walls and establish drainage. The builders have already addressed the problem of flowing water and mud from adjacent properties onto the play area used by My Spanish Village by installing a temporary repair to the existing retaining walls. That will be replaced during construction by permanent retaining walls, drainage system and fencing along the property lines. These changes will be absorbed as part of the project builders' costs.

St. Paul's is renting 13 parking spaces to the developer for the parking of project staff and a project trailer during construction. With the exception of the trailer, parking spaces will be reserved for project use Monday through Saturday, but not Sundays. The 13 spaces to be marked "reserved" will be those along the Western side of the parking lot, starting at the Northwest corner (nearest the street) and running along that Western fence line.

Also, the developer has applied to the City of Walnut Creek, with St. Paul's support, to construct a permanent sidewalk and required retaining wall along the front of St. Paul's property at 1944 Trinity Ave. (Rev. Jeff's house). It would connect the new sidewalk in front of the new building and the sidewalk in front of 1924 Trinity, the church proper. This would be at no cost to St. Paul's.

Another benefit of the project was that two of Trinity Center's clients were able to rent, at below market rate, the existing homes on the two lots on a month to month basis until construction starts this spring. This is a benefit to the developer and St. Paul's to have the property occupied and not subject to vandalism or potential squatters. The benefit to the renters is to reestablish their credit record as renters, acquire interim housing during a particularly difficult winter and have some stability in their lives while they keep their jobs.

Charles Couch

Lenten and Easter Greetings from Your Facility Manager

As your Facility Manager, sometimes hectic days are filled with scheduling events, agreements, parking issues, property issues, and collecting rents. One of the things I love the most is the opportunity to show off St. Paul's Chapel and Church when strangers ask to hold their wedding or other special event on our beautiful property. It gives me the opportunity to brag that this special space, dedicated to the worship and honor of God, is home to not one but three Christian congregations. We are joined by the Open Door East Bay Community and St. Peter and St. Paul Orthodox Church.

This special sharing does, on occasion, present challenges which call on our creative and cooperative spirit. For example, preparing the calendar for Lent, Holy Week and Easter this year became a fun time coordinating special services for each congregation. The Christian Orthodox Church uses the Revised Julian Calendar to determine the date Easter is to be celebrated each year. On many years, their Easter celebration date will be a week apart from the Western Christian Church. Occasionally, the difference is as much as a month. This year they will hold their Easter celebration on the same date as St. Paul's, April 16. The next time we will be celebrating Easter on the same date, will be in 2025. The Orthodox hold special services each evening during Holy Week, with their Easter Vigil and Celebration on Saturday night, 10p.m. to 1a.m. Easter Morning, followed by an Easter Breakfast ending about 3a.m.

The Open Door East Bay Community focuses on Good Friday with an elaborate Stations of the Cross set up in the Parish Hall. It is available and open 5p.m. to 8p.m. if you would like to drop in. St. Paul's and Open Door each conclude Holy Week with services on Easter Sunday.

We have much to be thankful for, including the unique relationship of our trinity of congregations.

Bev. Price

Gifts and Memorials

The Gifts and Memorials Committee is one that you don't hear much about; so here is a reminder. Parishioners, families, and friends often make gifts to St. Paul's in memory of a loved one, to support a particular project or need, or to honor an individual or special occasion. The Committee is responsible for receiving the gift and evaluating all issues relevant to the donation. We meet throughout the year to accept (or reject) the gift, send acknowledgement and thank-you notes, as appropriate, and disburse funds when requested. We require that the intention of the donor be strictly followed if they were designated to a particular ministry or cause. Sometimes the gift is not designated to a particular need and is simply a gift to the church. Often, smaller gifts are pooled together to fund a special need that arises outside the official operating budget. A list of donations is kept in the official "Gifts and Memorials" binder found in the church office.

The various ministries, committees, and/or groups of St. Paul's can submit proposals to the Committee to access these funds to cover a special project that they may have outside their usual operating activities. The Committee will evaluate and act on the proposal. Distributions above \$1000 must be approved by the Vestry.

If this committee is an area you might like to be part of contact John Williams at johnrheawill@gmail.com.

John D Williams

Valentine Tea 2017 Report

"Many thanks to everyone who participated in the 14th annual Valentine Tea."

This was a very labor-intensive event, taking many combined hours to make it the success it was. From autumn to February D-day, a dedicated committee of planners and chefs worked diligently. The room looked lovely; the tea and food were delightful; the store looked very inviting. Everyone did a super job. The raffle/auction items definitely lived up to everyone's expectations. Special thanks to our setup, cleaning and serving staffs who all did a bang-up job, as did our talented musical emcee and auctioneer. Kudos to all!

We are pleased to be able to send \$4350 each to our local charities, Bay Area Crisis Nursery and Living Grace; and \$500 to our international charity Nothing But Nets.

Our special thanks to those of you who support the tea with your presence, and your generosity. Without you there is no event to celebrate. We look forward to celebrating next year on February 10, 2018.

Julie Layne

How Important Is The Rummage Sale

Part II

In the last Epistle, we discussed all the benefits of our semi-annual rummage sale, and left you with the cliff-hanger call to action. So, without further ado, here's how you can help:

- Collecting and sorting – Starting approximately six weeks before the sale, help collect rummage on one or more Sunday mornings. The items are sorted into broad groups, bagged, labelled and put up in the rummage closet, helping save time during set-up week.
- Set Up Sunday – Volunteers needed to haul the rummage collected from the closet to the parish hall, set up tables for the sale and begin general sorting. This takes a few hours early on the Sunday afternoon preceding the sale and requires people to lift and move bags of rummage. It can be quite fun if lots of able-bodied people help!
- Set Up Week – Volunteers need to sort rummage, tag and price the items in day and evening shifts. We have pricing guidelines and “specialists” to help in the various areas (clothes, linens, household, etc). There is no requirement to stay the entire shift or come every day. Come when you can.
- Cashiers – Needed for the actual sale on Saturday and Sunday. The Saturday morning shift requires four cashiers to handle the crowd.
- Floor monitors – Needed for the actual sale on Saturday and Sunday to monitor the floor and straighten up rummage to keep everything looking neat during the sale. Extra monitors are needed for the first couple of hours when the doors open on Saturday morning to handle the 100+ people waiting to come in.
- Clean up – Needed to help bag and box up the unsold rummage when the sale is over and return the parish hall to its normal state.

Those of us who regularly help with the sales would really like to continue with the tradition of a Spring and Fall sale. The next sale will be held May 13th and 14th with set up beginning May 7th. Can you help continue this worthwhile project??

For more information, please contact Joan McDavid (jmcdvd5@comcast.net) or Leslie Dawson (leslie@dawsoncpafirm.com).

Leslie Dawson

Food Box Drive

For at least 20 years, St. Paul's Contra Costa County Interfaith Coalition Committee has organized an emergency food box drive. These boxes provide a three-day supply of nonperishables for a family of four. We then give the filled boxes to volunteer services which is part of the Employment and Human Services Department for our county. Case managers give this food to families who need a temporary food source. When we started doing this, the need was about four boxes per month, but now it averages 15 per month.

Guess what? It is time for our 2017 Drive!

Our goal is to fill 40 boxes.

We will begin the drive on April 2nd by passing out grocery bags that have the contents list stapled to each one. The drive will continue for six weeks with the last day being Mother's Day. The dates are April 2nd, April 9th, April 16th, April 23rd, April 30th, May 7th and May 14th.

On May 20th from 9a.m.-11a.m., we will set up the distribution area. We will box up the food in the Parish Hall after each service.

Because we know that it is easier for some people to donate money rather than shop, and because we buy some of the needed items from the food bank, monetary donations are very welcome. Make checks out to St. Paul's Food Drive and put them in the offering plate or mail them to the office.

We also need volunteers to pass out the bags, shop for extras as needed and help refill the tables as the food is boxed. If you can provide extra help, Contact Sue Phalen at 925-899-0567.

Jesus asked us to “Feed the hungry”. This is one way that we do so. We ask God's blessing on the Parish project!

Sue Phalen



Report from the 2017 Honduras Away Team-Different Yet Still the Same

On January 16 twelve members of the Honduras away team (including three new members) arrived in Tegucigalpa to begin this year's work with our friends in Villa Nueva. As always, our most important work is building and strengthening our relationships within the community.

As we have done in past years, we bought and filled backpacks with required school supplies for students, and began work on this year's project to build new tables and benches in the church dining/community room. We worked on a Vacation Bible School program for some 100 children, and sponsored daily hot lunches as well as a field trip to Picacha Park for the children and adult chaperones.

So what was different? Instead of buying, sorting, and filling 150 backpacks to be distributed to those who need them we were able to provide 239 backpacks filled with the required basic school supplies. Last year's team had begun the process of mentoring leaders to plan and conduct the Vacation Bible School and this year Allan and Angela led the team of Bessie, Karelia, Claudia, Gaby, Alison, Nidia, Rafael, Maynor, and Josue in planning, coordinating and leading a very successful program. Our role was to support, encourage, and assist as asked and we couldn't be prouder of the job that the Villa Nueva team did!

Finally the Reverenda Maria Consuelo, who has worked with the congregation of San Juan Evangelista since its beginning, was retiring at the end of February. We, along with the whole community and Reverend Sylvia Vásquez, threw a party to acknowledge all she has done to improve the lives of the people there materially as well as spiritually. The children traced their hands and wrote moving notes to the Reverenda, which we cut out and strung in the dining hall. We made and hung elaborate streamers and large tissue paper flowers throughout the site. We also bought colorful floral arrangements to decorate the church.

The Right Reverend Lloyd Allen, Bishop of Honduras, was present for the service that preceded the party where more than 20 were confirmed and received into the Episcopal church. He spoke of Reverenda Maria Consuelo's background and accomplishments and of the support provided by her mentor, Reverend Sylvia. He thanked St. Paul's for our commitment to the people of San Juan Evangelista in providing both financial and spiritual support. To our surprise, he gave us two plaques, one for our parish and one for our team members, including Bill Ennis. He also gave Reverend Sylvia a plaque commemorating her 19 years of support and leadership.

We were all humbled by this moving recognition of what we all here at St. Paul's do. For it is by your support of our fundraisers, your support in donating supplies and providing rides to and from the airport, and especially your support through your ongoing prayers and encouragement that the away team is able to continue working and growing with our friends in Villa Nueva. Thank you!

Sherry Mattern



The Honduras Team



The children of Villa Nueva

Holy Week

Taizé Service in the Chapel
Wednesday April 12th - 7:00 p.m.

Maundy Thursday Service in the Chapel
Thursday, April 13th - 7:00p.m.

Good Friday
Good Friday Service in the Chapel
Friday, April 14th - 7:00p.m.

Stations of the Cross Hosted by Open Door
Friday, April 14th - this is a drop in event, 5p.m.-8p.m.
Childcare available

Great Vigil of Easter
At St. Gregory's in San Francisco
Meet Rev Jeff at St. Paul's at 5:45p.m.

Easter Sunday - Sunday, April 16th - He is Risen!
7:30a.m. - traditional Easter Eucharist in the Chapel

9:00a.m. - EASTER CONVERSATION AND CRAFT HOUR - 9-10a.m. - April 16th.
Kids, teens, parents, and grandparents are all invited to enjoy any and all of the activities before the 10:30a.m. service on Easter! You can join the Easter Egg Hunt and Craft Time; you can also join the Discussion Forum "What Easter Means To You." You're welcome to leave your kids with us and take part in the discussion, and you're welcome to join them in both!
Whatever your age, you're just right.

10:30a.m. Easter Eucharist with Children's Homily in the Church
*childcare available 9a.m. to 12p.m.

**Join Us at St. Paul's East for Easter Brunch
Hosted by The Mortons'
All are invited to brunch after Easter services!**

Just a Reminder!!

See website for full calendar of events.

The Epistle Team wants to hear from you...

What would you like to see in the Epistle? Send suggestions, articles and other items to Epistle@stpaulswc.org or contact Rhea Williams at johnrheawill@gmail.com

Bed Drive for CCIC – Matching Grant

Beds are desperately needed once again. From now until April 15th, all donations to the Contra Costa Interfaith Coalition (CCIC) bed fund will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$3,000! So, every dollar you donate will be doubled for this great cause.

What are the beds and furniture used for? They are given to individuals and families referred by 30 social service agencies throughout the county. A recent example involves a Grandmother who has recently been given custody of eight grandchildren to raise and needs beds for them.

The CCIC volunteers scour resale shops and garage sales for bargain beds and furniture. They work hard to stretch the dollars as far as possible, often getting additional discounts on their purchases.

Please be part of this wonderful opportunity and make a fully tax- deductible contribution to CCIC today!

Make checks payable to CCIC c/o Leslie Dawson 7186 Briza Loop San Ramon, CA 94582

For questions, contact Leslie at 925-586-2396 or leslie@dawsoncpafirm.com

Save the Dates

Rummage Sale

Spring 2017 Rummage Sale May 13th & 14th

Food Box Drive

May 20, 2017, in St. Paul's Parish Hall

Family Camp

Mark your calendars now for the 2017 Family Camp(ing) experience.

This year we will be gathering from July 15 - July 28.

Men's Retreat at Walker Creek

Join the Men's Retreat this year, On Octobert 13-15 at Walker Creek

Women's Retreat at Bishop's Ranch

Enjoy a fall getaway and an opportunity to refresh yourself in the beautiful natural setting of the Bishop's Ranch in Healdsburg Nov. 17-19. The women of St. Paul's will gather at this lovely location - a perfect place to reconnect with nature, with others and with oneself. Fall colors, fellowship, conversations and time for quiet reflection are all part of the weekend retreat. Rev. Miskelly has agreed to be the facilitator. Sign-ups will begin shortly, fees will include several meals, lodging and our leader's presentations and breakout groups.

Mark your calendar and give yourself an autumn gift of peace and relaxation.

St. Paul's Clergy and Staff

Interim Rector

The Rev. Audrey Miskelley.....amiskelley@stpaulswc.org

Associate Rector

The Rev. Jeffrey A. Dodge.....jdodge@stpaulswc.org

Deacons

The Rev. Donald Adolphson.....dadolphson@stpaulswc.org

The Rev. Laina Wood Casillas.....lcasillas@stpaulswc.org

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Sara O'Bryansobryan@stpaulswc.org

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Dwight Stone.....stonemusique@gmail.com

Youth Minister

Sean Potts.....spotts@stpaulswc.org

Facilities Manager

Bev Price.....facilitymanager@stpaulswc.org

Vestry

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Junior Warden	Pete Smyth	jrwarden@stpaulswc.org
CFO	Jennifer Machado	cfo@stpaulswc.org
Clerk	Molly Pfau Clopp	clerkofthevestry@stpaulswc.org

Ministry Teams

To join a team, contact the Vestry Liaison listed.

Administration	Audrey Miskelley (Staff)	amiskelley@stpaulswc.org
Adult Formation (SPACE)	Emily Lagrone	adulteducation@stpaulswc.org
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Communication*	Emily Hopkins	communication@stpaulswc.org
Faith in Action (Outreach)	David Mattern	faithinaction@stpaulswc.org
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*Epistle Team Rhea Williams, Sara O'Bryan, Ned Soares epistle@stpaulswc.org



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