

THE EPISTLE

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, WALNUT CREEK | MAY/JUNE 2021



A Message From The Reverend Krista Fregoso

Not quite resurrected....

I wonder if Jesus' resurrection was something immediate or if it was something that took time. Did it take the entirety of the three days or did it come in fits and starts? Was it like an old car that takes two or three tries and some gas to get started or did resurrection build slowly, like the sun slowly rising, gradually pouring light into the world. I think about these things as we seem to be somewhere in between in this almost-post pandemic world. Will we go back to the way it was? Or what will it look like when we return to church and are worshipping together?

Resurrection takes time, as there is so much to leave behind, and change is hard. The first instinct might be to resuscitate, to return to old ways of being, rather than die and be born anew. The old way is so comforting, and the new can be so exhausting. Our community is undergoing a transformation. The pandemic came like a deep cold freeze, halting life as we knew it, forcing us to take cover, build cocoons, and wait it out. None expected it to take the time it has, nor have we expected it to change us as much as it has.

The truth is, we knew that parts of our community needed to adapt and change to open ourselves to be fully welcoming to a world that is changing around us. We knew that we needed to open our doors a little wider but...

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Musical Notes

Doxology and its Various Forms

By DR. LARRY CRUMMER

When someone hears the term *doxology*, they almost immediately associate it with the song we sing after the offering is collected in church on Sunday morning. The organist plays the introduction, and the ushers walk down the center aisle holding the collection plates as we sing “Praise God from whom all blessings flow.”

The term *doxology* has a much broader definition, that of a *short hymn of praise to God which is often added to the end of hymns, canticles, and Psalms*. Probably the most used is The Common Doxology or The Doxology that we sing after the offering. It is considered a form of the Trinitarian doxology where we praise the Trinity, “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” or the “Three in One.”

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*



When I was growing up in the Methodist church, we not only sang this traditional doxology, but at some time during the reading of the scriptures, we also sang the Gloria Patri, also known as the Lesser Doxology (lesser because of its length):

*Glory [be] to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be.
World without end, Amen.*

Did you know, however, that we also sing what is known as the Greater Doxology? This is the Gloria, or *Glory to God in the Highest*, the opening words sung by the chorus of angels at the birth of Jesus found in Luke 2. It is called the Greater Doxology because of its greater length.

And have you heard of the Eucharistic Doxology? You may never have heard it called this, but this is the text sung or recited by the celebrant at the end of the Eucharistic prayer:

*By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours,
Almighty Father, now and forever. AMEN.*

Look for the last verses of many of the hymns we sing which are also a doxology. For example, #400 in the 1982 Hymnal, *All Creatures of our God and King*:

Praise God the Father, praise the Son, and praise the Spirit, Three in One.

Now that you have a broader concept of the term, be on the lookout for the many and various doxologies we say or sing during our worship services.



Our Covenant with God to Care for Creation

By PHIL WEBSTER

Our covenant with God asks us to care for our planet. How's that going? There certainly is a cost to humankind rising to such a successful species with so much control. With such uniqueness and power these last 12,000 years, we dominate and control all other forms of life.

In the last 100 years at least 543 vertebrate species went extinct; Google *Humans & The Extinction Crisis*. This is much higher than the earth's normal background extinction rate and exponentially faster. Not only are these creatures of God gone forever, but their gift to us, their gene pool as a possible human resource, is gone as well. (Source: National Academy of Sciences).



Perseverance Rover/NASA)

The covenant asks us to nurture our planet, to steward the land, manage it, and respect it. Look at the planet Mars. This recent photo (left) from March, 2021 shows a barren, desolate place, a dirt pile, like most of the other planets in the universe that only an astro-geologist could love. We are so lucky that we ended up on earth. God placed us in a lush world, rich with clean air and water, and diverse environments. I'm glad I wasn't born on Mars.

What does God want? "The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it." Genesis 2:15. "The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me." Leviticus 25:23. Or see Ezekiel 34:2-4, or Jeremiah 2:7. God has a lot to say. What would Jesus say? He said to love each other, take care of ourselves, like any parent would want for their children. But our pollution is certainly out of control. "How's that going?" my friend, the Rev. Sylvia Vasquez, would say.

What can we do? Social change must happen, and this comes about when society makes decisions about what they DO, and makes changes! It may seem like we are only pebbles, throwing ourselves at changing how a river flows. But if we get enough pebbles, we can move rivers. Social movements CAN WORK. See the Scientific American article, "*How Social Justice Movements Succeed*," March 1, 2021.

We have history. We can do this.

Almighty God, in giving us dominion over things on earth, you made us fellow workers in your creation: Give us wisdom and reverence so to use the resources of nature, that no one may suffer from our abuse of them, and that generations yet to come may continue to praise you for your bounty; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(The Book of Common Prayer, p. 827)

Church Life

The Epistle editorial team posed the question:

“In our Covenant With God to Care for Creation, What can we do to Protect our Planet?”



Hugh Harvey

The outdoors and our environment are very important to me. My philosophy is the one heard often, "Think globally, act locally." I have a Board position with Mount Diablo Audubon Society as field trip chair, and I support other local groups such as Save Mount Diablo and John Muir Land Trust. **Rosita** and I have been blessed that our nephews and nieces in Chile have learned how to look at and think about the outside world, the birds in particular.

Ainsley Stewart, 11, as told to her mom Lisa Bell Stewart

There are a lot of things that we can do to care for God's creation. In school we have been learning about God's promise to us and what we can do to keep our side of the promise. Since animals are part of God's creation we can protect them and we can preserve the environment that is used to feed and sustain animals for food by eating less meat.

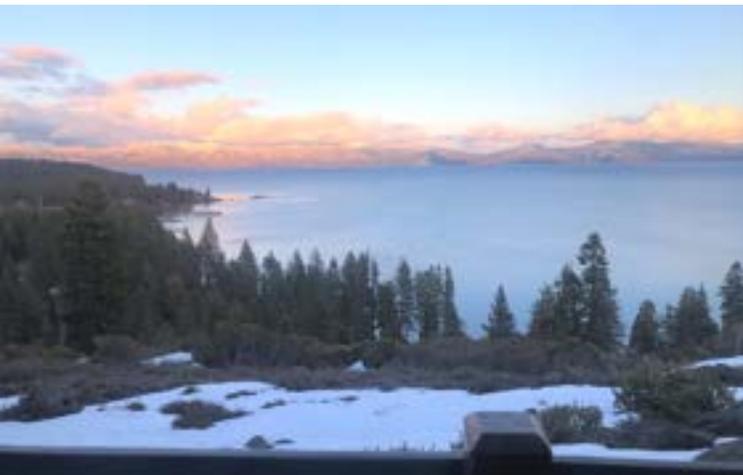
We should try to use fewer fossil fuels, for example, by walking, biking, or using public transportation to get cars off the road, and using electric vehicles; also, by using solar or wind power instead of electricity made by using fossil fuel.

We could also plant a garden. Plants exchange our carbon dioxide for oxygen, so having more trees and plants give us cleaner air. Also, if we plant a garden, we have yummy fruits and vegetables. And its fun to do!



Lynn and Mike Yale

We try to enjoy God's creation every day we can, by doing something as simple as walking our poodle around the neighborhood, hiking, biking, skiing, either in the Bay Area or around Lake Tahoe. God's creation is always available, and usually no reservations are necessary to either enjoy or protect it.



We are strong advocates of leaving no trace of the time we spend enjoying creation. We make it a point not to buy plastics, and to use biodegradables and recycleables. Biking to the farmers market instead of driving limits our carbon footprint, and cooking from scratch limits our dependence on wasteful packaging. Soon we will participate in a 72-mile clean-up of the Tahoe shoreline.

Church Life

Bill Oman

Being in covenant with God for me means stopping for a moment every day to appreciate the beauty and natural order in nature: a majestic sunrise outside my window, a budding rose, or animals in the wild. It helps keep me "right sized" and from believing I'm in control.



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."
~Margaret Mead

Did You Know?

Reduce / Reuse / Recycle / Recover / Respect

Rhea Williams

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), when you leave the water running while brushing your teeth, you are wasting, on average, three to four gallons of water each time. Not good for the environment, not good for our drought, not good for your budget. Remember to turn the water off!



A Virtual Night of Hope
Together We Persevere
Friday, June 11, 2021 | 5:30 - 7:00 pm

School Partnership with Meadow Homes Elementary

Reading Tutors Reflect

By JESSICA BEERBAUM WITH ANNE MORTON

It took some time to get going and is currently on hold. But for 11 weeks, volunteers from two church communities spent two hours a week via Zoom with second graders, struggling readers, from **Meadow Homes Elementary**. Equipped with teaching materials purchased by **Cornerstone Fellowship Church** and organized by school staff, eight tutors—two from **St. Paul's**, four from Cornerstone, and two retired from Meadow Homes—started in mid-January supporting the reading skills of up to six students. After the first successful six week session, a new session started and three more St. Paul's volunteers joined: **Julie Layne**, **Sherry Mattern** and **Sue Phalen**. Camaraderie among the volunteers was a nice side benefit.

With the return of in-school instruction, the tutoring program is on hold. This is unfortunate because the tutors were committed to the effort and had gotten into the swing of things. Many students, many new to instruction in English, made real progress, despite the challenges of Zoom. The second session also included students who had made significant progress in the first session and benefited from having a kind and attentive adult listen to them read. All needed a positive experience with the written word. Small instruction groups allow for encouragement and personalized teaching.

Tutoring on Zoom provided a glimpse of what the school year has been like for teachers, students, and parents. Instruction was often interrupted by a nearby conversation or a younger sibling appearing on screen. Students did not always find their materials. Some students were in a child care center with other students on other programs nearby. Not all students showed up—already “Zoomed out.” Some parents sat with their child to help them focus.



Anne Morton, Tutor



Jessica Beerbaum, Tutor

Amy Kotowski, Kids Leader at Cornerstone Fellowship, coordinated the effort with **Kathryn Firestone**, Meadow Homes' Principal. Long before tutors met students, decisions were made about which students to work with, what materials to purchase, and how to schedule sessions. Parents were contacted and materials were distributed. Hopefully, volunteer tutoring in some form will return to Meadow Homes in the near future. Several St. Paul's parishioners have asked to be included.

Who knows how many children we can help become joyous and competent readers!

The Strangest Year



By JUDITH DILLINGHAM

The year of the pandemic has been one of the most unusual years any of us have lived. For some it was a year of loss, illness, isolation, and grief.

However, there was another face to this year. Speaking for my husband **Ashok** and me, this year has been one of reflection and pleasure in the small things in our lives. Our evening walks have been a high point of the day. In the fall we really looked at the leaves. We noted which trees changed to yellow and orange. The flowers faded, but Ashok started collecting acorns. We looked in astonishment at the different shapes, sizes, and colors of acorns. We rejoiced in the coming of spring. The daffodils came out, and I learned wonderful things about them. They aren't all alike.

While we missed some old friends, we made new ones. The people in our neighborhood whom we had only waved at, moved from acquaintances to friends. We began to meet on Thursday afternoons, to sit in a circle on our common lawn. We shared books we were reading, and music we had listened to. Fall came and one neighbor made split pea soup for us to drink while we chatted. We met a couple on our walks and they have become friends.

Sunday has become a special day for us. We postpone breakfast until after church so that we can read the chat column and think about each of the people who greet us. Ashok is a Presbyterian but for this year he has cheerfully been an Episcopalian. I have shared with him how much the prayers mean to me. We had lengthy discussions about how liturgical services and Presbyterian services differ from the Evangelical services I grew up in. After the service, we have enjoyed talking over the sermon and the new insights we had received.



We basked in the music of the choir and Larry's wonderful hymn arrangements.

Ashok and I have commented often that it has been a good year. Who and what we have missed have become more precious to us. What we have gained we will continue to enjoy.

Our biggest gain has been the recognition of the "little things" that make life so wonderful.



Care for God's Creation: Local & Global

By EMILY HOPKINS



In March 2020, at the scary start of the pandemic, I was invited to a **Faith Community Call for Care and Resilience** with religious folks, from all traditions and from all over the world. Hosted by **GreenFaith**, it was a spiritual balm, calming at a time when I needed it, and a warm community with a shared desire to heal our world.

Eventually, this led to my participation in a global event on March 11, 2021 —Sacred People/Sacred Earth—in partnership with the **Interfaith Climate Action Network** (ICAN) of Contra Costa County. What a powerful day of action! In 45 countries, with over 420 events, we sounded the alarm for climate justice together as one global grassroots multi-faith community.

Watch the slide show and video from March 11 on the ICAN Facebook page. Video of Rev. Krista and the kickoff are on St. Paul's Facebook page.

ICAN is a committee of the Social Justice Alliance of the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County and a member of California Interfaith Power and Light, a Cooperation Circle of the United Religions Initiative.

In Contra Costa, across the U.S., and around the world, groups like GreenFaith and ICAN are working together to get local, state, and national governments to take action on climate change. GreenFaith is delivering a bold vision and demands to the leaders who will meet in September for the United Nations Conference of Parties, when nations will renew their pledges from the Paris Climate Accord. For a list of religious leaders who have signed the statement, visit greenfaith.org/take-action/sacred-people-sacred-earth.

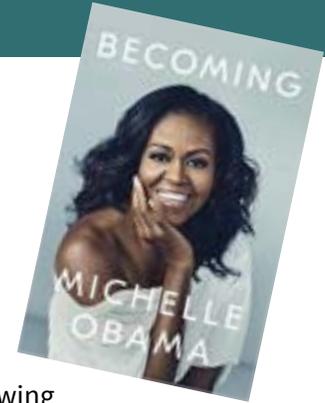
Individually, we can recycle, drive less, shift away from fossil fuels, and try to live more lightly on the earth. Our local actions are important; and we also need global solutions to a global climate crisis.

I feel blessed to be connected with so many people of faith who are organizing so that the voice of religion is raised up to world leaders. We are saying we want to restore God's creation, and so restore the health of every living thing. This is how we love our neighbors. This is how we strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.

Many churches in our Deanery participated in ringing their bells at noon on March 11 to kick off the Climate Emergency March, from St. Paul's to City Hall in downtown Walnut Creek, where a resolution was proposed regarding the climate emergency our earth is facing. **Hugh Harvey** tolled St. Paul's historic chapel bell 11 times to signify that we are at the 11th hour to save our planet. **Rev. Jane** from St. Anna's in Antioch rang the bell out on the land for Jubilee Farm Church in Brentwood, and the bell at Grace Martinez also tolled. To learn more about this important initiative, contact **Emily Hopkins** at info@stpaulswc.org.

Becoming

Book Review By PAT BAXTER



Becoming, **Michelle Obama's** autobiography, covers her life from childhood growing up in the South Side of Chicago, through her time in the White House as First Lady of the United States.

She came from a working/middle class home with very loving, supportive, hard working parents and a large extended family. She and her family worked hard and achieved a great deal. During her childhood Michelle would tell people that she wanted to be a pediatrician. She got a lot of praise for that choice, and she liked that. She did not, however, pursue that goal. Instead, she went to Princeton for undergraduate work and to Harvard for law school. She was successful in her law career, but felt dissatisfied, and after carefully considering her options, she worked as a vice president at a hospital and director at a nonprofit corporation, then she became the first African American First Lady of the United States.

While we know a lot about the Obamas and their lives in the White House, her book reveals much more about Michelle the person. Her mother had high expectations, and with love, she pushed Michelle to excel. Michelle had a passion for learning and was always a high achiever, surpassing her counselors' and teachers' expectations. She shares how these high expectations, nurtured with love, have paid off despite multiple ups and downs throughout her life. Mrs. Obama was mentored by several women, and now considers it very important to mentor women and children. Among her major role models were **Mary Tyler Moore** and her mother, because she always wanted to be a successful career woman with a sense of humor and to be a great mother.

Mrs. Obama worked on several projects while in the White House, some of which have an impact on our climate and the environment. I believe her early interest in being a pediatrician and her own children's health influenced her decisions to combat childhood obesity and to encourage healthy eating and exercise for children. When her husband was elected President and she became First Lady, she started her work to encourage healthy nutrition and exercise for children. Her efforts have been very successful. Another major accomplishment is the White House Kitchen Garden. As a result of her efforts, many schools and communities around the country started growing vegetable gardens and encouraging healthy eating habits in children. The number of personal vegetable gardens has grown significantly since 2008, and they continue to be important for many people, while improving the environment.

I highly recommend *Becoming*. It's a feel-good book full of inspiration and hope. Along with the excellent narrative the book includes many photographs portraying Michelle Obama's life. Thanks, Michelle!





Recipes From the Garden

By KEN JESSUP

We've just started our garden. Some seeds haven't even popped up yet! The tomato plants are only 4" high, and we won't have anything harvested until June/July. But oh, it's worth the wait.

We have three little neighborhood girls we call our "Zucchini girls," who love to come over when **Linnea** is gardening.

Recipe: Skewered Zucchini on the Grill

- Skewer zucchini chunks, dried apricots, and onion chunks
- Drizzle with apricot jam

Leave on BBQ two-three minutes. Quick and easy for summer.

Now here's a garden that'll keep you healthy...kale and chard!

Recipe: Kale and Chard

- In a saute pan, drizzle olive oil, add chopped garlic
- Drop in the kale or chard for two minutes, adding a few drops of water as needed
- Toss a few times while in the pan, and done!



Did You Know?

Reduce / Reuse / Recycle / Recover / Respect

Sheri Grosjean

Looking out my front window on garbage day, I watched the mechanical arms of the giant "Resource Recovery" truck reach out, pick up my trash can, and empty it deftly into the gaping mouth of the truck.

The arms then repeated the same maneuver with my recycling bin, and emptied it into...the same gaping

hole. I panicked, thinking that for some unfathomable reason, my refuse company was no longer separating the recycling from the trash. I sent a quick email to the company asking "Why?!"

Apparently, that truck has two internal compartments, one for trash and one for recycling. With the flip of a switch, the driver changes which compartment to use as the bins are emptied. This is part of the company's effort to reduce its carbon footprint, since only one truck is required to make the pick-up now, not two.

I'm impressed!





Protecting God's Creation

By LESLIE GLEASON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TRINITY CENTER

Easter came to us early this year, bearing the joyful message that is ours to receive and share—that we are each precious, unique, and beautiful, and we each have a part to play in protecting the delicate balance of God's creation.

As we enjoy the gentle lengthening and warming of the days, the beauty of nature reminds us that there is always hope of new life, even in the face of so much individual and communal loss and mourning. The rose bushes in the parish courtyard, pruned back to woody stems in the winter, are showing off their new blossoms in brilliant pink, yellow, and orange, welcoming preschoolers, seasoned tax aides, and those seeking shelter and safety here on Trinity Avenue.



Nature bears witness to both the fragility and fortitude of life, from the dancing mayfly with a one-day adult lifespan to majestic redwoods outlasting centuries of natural and human disasters. We have lived through tremendous upheaval and human drama over the past year, and we are acutely aware of our interdependence with each other and with the natural world. We have learned the power of perseverance over disease, despair, and disengagement.

After a year of separation, we are eager to gather again—what can we do in this moment to bring new energy to addressing our biggest human and environmental challenges? There are lots of opportunities in front of us—it doesn't even have to be a "big" thing, but let's each start somewhere.

And with each action we take, we will know that we are living out our mission to take care of each other and our beautiful planet.

A Message From Rev. Krista

Cont'd from pg. 1

...in this non-Christian world, we weren't sure how to go about it. The pandemic came and we stretched. We tried new skills and found new charisms (an endowment or extraordinary power given by the Holy Spirit). The spirit has provided!

Now as the deep freeze begins to thaw, we are given a choice. Should we lean fully into a new way of being, or do we keep doing what we know and return to the way that was? Do we resuscitate or resurrect?

St. Paul's, I invite us to be patient and brave. We are evolving and becoming a community of faith for the people of today, using the skills and charisms we have learned from this past year. It will take time, trial, and error but it will prepare us to be a community.

A community grounded in the faith of resurrection.

Palm Sunday



Maundy Thursday: "Our Pandemic Year"



Beerbaum miles

Church Life



The best Saturday night in town! St. Paul's got it right presenting the wonderful Konevets Quartet streamed from St. Petersburg. The concert was rich and authentic with Russian tradition. The most fun I've had on a weekend since sheltering in place! I can't wait to attend more concerts.

~Sandra Cherkassky, concert attendee

Concert Review Konevets Quartet



By DEBORAH WEBSTER

With the skills and wizardry of our technical team, we were able to host one of our favorite vocal groups, the **Konevets Quartet** at our online Concert Series event in April. The Konevets Quartet performed for us from the Church of the Nativity of the Theotokos, in St. Petersburg, Russia, while we hosted and broadcast the performance from our church. And, what a marvelous performance the Quartet brought us!

The four voices defined the absolute meaning of "ensemble:" together, many making the voice of one. From a virtuosity perspective, the Quartet was superb; every phrase, rhythm, and sound they projected was perfectly aligned, perfectly executed. But beyond the perfection of their technique, there was musicality—the sweetness that lured the soul out of the darkness and drew you in to listen and feel the music around you.

The Quartet began their performance with a collection of songs of Holy Week and Easter. The beauty of their music was soul-quenching, to say the least. Then, for the second half of the performance, they took us for a tour of places they have visited and studied to bring us their favorite folk tunes in the native languages. They presented songs of historic significance from Russia, Bosnia, Georgia, and Serbia, and even went westward, bringing us American Spirituals and a jazzed-up version of *Baa Baa Black Sheep* that will be in my head for weeks. What a night! What a treat for us all!



Save These Saturdays

May 29
Austin & Owens
Classical & Jazz Duo

June 19
Natsuki Fukasawa
Classical Pianist



St. Paul's Online Book Groups

Looking for good books and engaging conversations? Join our monthly afternoon and evening book groups via Zoom!



Afternoon: Thursdays | 12:30 - 1:30 pm

May 13: *The Number One Ladies' Detective Agency* by Alexander McCall Smith

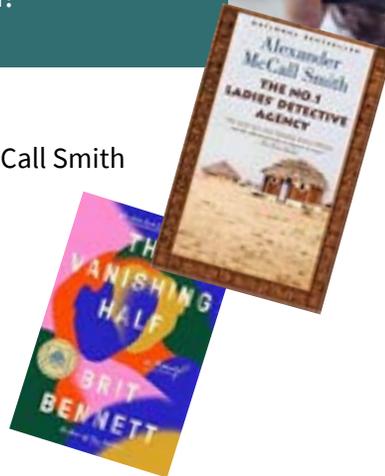
June 10: *My Own Words* by Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Evening: Thursdays | 7:00 - 8:00 pm

May 13: *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett

June 10: *Lost Roses* by Martha Hall Kelly

For Zoom link or to learn more, email info@stpaulswc.org



Did You Know?

Reduce / Reuse / Recycle / Recover / Respect

Eileen Mitchell

Do you recall how we were once constantly reminded to cut the plastic around six-packs because they presented a choking hazard to wildlife? Well, the same now applies to those small tabs we find on milk and juice cartons. Cut them before disposing, and don't forget to cut the string around discarded masks as well. Little necks will thank you!

Inspiration

It's surely our responsibility to do everything within our power to create a planet that provides a home not just for us, but for all life on Earth.

~David Attenborough



Leadership and Staff



Rector:	The Reverend Krista Fregoso
Interim Associate:	The Reverend Laurie Moyer
Deacon:	The Reverend Margaretmary Staller
Seminarian:	Jen Crompton
Deacon Emeritus:	The Reverend Donald Adolphson
Chief of Staff:	Eileen Mitchell
Music Minister:	Dr. Larry Crummer

Vestry of St. Paul's

Lisa Bell Stewart, Senior Warden	Marianne Johnson
Susan Burpee, Junior Warden	Ned Soares
Jessica Beerbaum	Jim Ward
Tom Chaffee	Jerry Williams
Melanie Corry	Mary-Jane Wood
Jennifer Machado, Chief Financial Officer	
Ronnie Marty, Clerk	



St. Paul's Vision Statement

At St. Paul's, as followers of Jesus Christ, we envision
a church that provides and supports
a loving community of faith: with our church,
with one another, and with our world,
Where all are welcome, no matter where they are on their spiritual journey,
Where activities, events, and opportunities support
spiritual growth for people of all ages and
diversities through worship, education, and service,
Where we use our God-given talents, time, and treasure
to lift the less fortunate and the vulnerable.
May we all support each other in remembering and
creating this vision, not just in the hours
we spend on campus, but during our daily lives, as we
interact with friends and neighbors,
and as we act as members of our wider communities.



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