

# THE EPISTLE

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, WALNUT CREEK | MARCH/APRIL 2022



## A Message From The Reverend Krista Fregoso

**Two groups were given cash.** One was directed to spend the money on themselves and the other was to spend the money on someone else. Before and after receiving the cash, each group was interviewed and was also given an MRI scan. What do you think they found?

The group that spent the money on others showed more brain activity in the areas associated with happiness and generosity. They reported higher levels of happiness and made more generous decisions than their self-spending counterparts. The experiment was repeated and showed similar results. Sound scientific proof that links generosity with joy and happiness.\*

Jesus taught this as well, teaching his disciples to live a love-centered life and to love even those who are our enemies. He says, *“A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back”* (Luke 6: 38). This good measure, given without expectation, will return. Participating in the Kingdom of God gives way to a joy-filled life.

This Lent we will focus on praying, fasting, and giving. Fasting and giving are traditional Lenten practices in the church. Traditionally, people would give up material treats, such as chocolate and meat, and give the money saved, and sometimes more, to those in need. Prayer is central to both of these practices, as fasting without prayer is a diet, and almsgiving without prayer is social outreach. **Rev. Lynne** will be teaching about different ways of prayer while I will be working with Joyful Noise on prayer practices through a scratch-off Lenten action card.

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\**Nature Communication* 8, article 15964 2017



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## A Message From The Reverend Lynne Sharp



Welcome to the Season of Lent! I love the season of Lent for a wide variety of reasons, but mostly because I take the season as a command and opportunity to re-order my life, my priorities, and my focus. We begin on Ash Wednesday with the solemn service that includes the rubric (instruction) where the “Minister appointed invites the people to the observance of a holy Lent, ...,” then the invitation to observe Lent by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial. Again and again, we are "invited" to stop, reflect, and repent of our ways—that is, the ways that our lifestyle, behavior, and habits interfere with our relationship to and with God, and our neighbor.

When I was newly ordained, I was given the opportunity on Ash Wednesday to impose ashes on a newborn baby’s forehead at the insistence of the mother. I was a bit surprised, humbled, and confused. After all, saying, “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return,” upon a newborn was a bit shocking. And yet, all of our lives are but a breath as we hear in Psalm 39:4-6, “Lord, let me know my end, and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is. You have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing in your sight. Surely everyone stands as a mere breath. Selah.” Life is short, and precious, and not something I want to waste.

**The season of Lent is a gift** inviting us to pause and really look at where our lives have been and where we are going. On our own, we don’t always take the time to stop and ponder. We don’t intentionally look at where we have fallen short and where God would have us stand. We forget how blessed, privileged, and fortunate we are, especially when we are in the midst of troubles. More importantly, we lose sight of where these gifts have come from, and how we are invited to use them in building God’s *kin-dom* here on earth.

I invite you to partake of the full range of Lenten opportunities from Ash Wednesday through Holy Week, including opportunities for prayer and formation. I would most welcome a meeting with you (in person or on Zoom) to discuss where you are right now, and where God might be calling you to amendment of life.

May you keep a Holy Lent.



## Pilgrimage to the Holy Land September 15-26, 2022

**The Rev. Lynne** is leading a group of Pilgrims to the Holy Land and invites you to consider if this is the year you will walk in the footsteps of Jesus’ birth, life, ministry, and resurrection. We'll stay in comfortable guest houses, eat amazing meals, and visit Shepherd’s Field, Bethlehem, Nazareth, the Holy Sepulcher, the Sea of Galilee, and much more. Total cost for this 12-day Pilgrimage is \$2410 (airfare not included), double occupancy. To register or learn more, contact the Rev. Lynne at (925) 934-2324 or [info@stpaulswc.org](mailto:info@stpaulswc.org).



## Musical Notes



By ERIC NEWELL, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

I don't know about you, but these weeks in which we're living feel like the start of a new season, and not just a new season, but a season of substantial transition.

With the decline of what is hopefully the final wave of this pandemic, and the careful and steady lifting of health and safety precautions around the nation, I feel more of a buzz of energy around other people—never more than around my typically lethargic students at school—and the best way for me to analogize this feeling is to compare it to our annual exit from winter hibernation. How beautifully (and perhaps divinely) timed that as our weather slowly warms and becomes more comfortable, our dispositions become a bit more hopeful. As many might begin spring cleaning around the house, we also, with caution and maybe even some doubt, begin to cleanse ourselves of this prolonged dormancy.

### As We Enter The Season Of Lent

I humbly offer an anecdotal nugget of wisdom from recent experience. Please note that this is not my wisdom but, if anything, something very good, directly from God that I feel called to share.

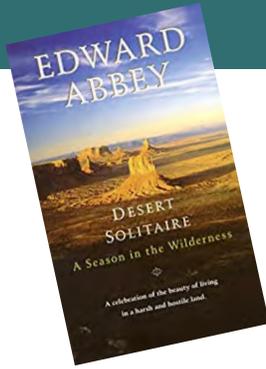
I was recently encouraged by a friend as well as my family to begin singing solo songs again (being trained in voice in college and really having enjoyed that as a large chunk of my daily life). After one of our January online services, I stayed in our sanctuary and sang to an empty, cavernous space for an hour and a half. I forgot the joy in it. I forgot the life in it. As an indication of exactly how life-giving that time was, I came back the following Sunday and did the same thing, with a single four-minute Handel aria, for another hour and a half. Taking up space and expressing with my instrument (which had been placed on a bodily bookshelf and collected dust for practically two years) changed everything about how energized and positive I felt and still feel on days I don't sing solo-istically. This mental and emotional effect carries me throughout the week.

**What's the point?** Well, we've all chosen to temporarily disregard one thing or another which we typically counted as part of our daily lives in February 2020, either because it has (for good reason) been considered dangerous with regard to viral transmission, or maybe we just didn't feel we had the capacity to carry on normally when the world felt like it was crashing down. But I'd invite you now, in this season of transition, to experiment with making noise, taking up space (aurally or physically or otherwise), and returning to something which might have been more life-giving than you ever realized back when it was in your life pre-pandemic. This was definitely the case for me.

Being the 'resident music guy' at St. Paul's, I would be remiss if I didn't especially encourage you to sing a song you haven't sung in a long time (yes, the shower counts!), or play the guitar, or the piano, even if you don't feel confident in your 'dusty instrument.' You might find that your mood is lightened, or you can breathe a bit more deeply, or that you're more aware of the incredibly good things God has given us which cost very little.



## Church Life



### *Desert Solitaire*

by Edward Abbey

A Review by DAVID MATTERN

Last summer we took a driving (mostly camping) trip through central Nevada, southern Utah, the corners of Colorado and New Mexico, and northern Arizona. We visited some of the lesser-known parks but also visited the well-known Arches National Park. A brief reference in a guidebook alerted me to the author **Edward Abbey**, who served as a seasonal park ranger at Arches for a couple of years beginning in 1956, back when it was a national monument and the entrance was an eight-mile unpaved road. His book *Desert Solitaire* is partly based on that assignment. It is considered by some to be in a class with Thoreau's *Walden* and Leopold's *Sand County Almanac*, passionate protectors of wilderness and nature.

Abbey lived in a sparse trailer at the ranger station near Balanced Rock (a totally improbable natural formation that is one of my favorites), the only official person living in the park. His job duties were not very time-consuming, providing him with plenty of his desired solitude.

The book is written in separate sections that might be variously considered a personal journal, philosophical essay, nature guide, travel memoir, or local folklore. Like a well-trained park ranger, Abbey weaves into his stories, with a subtle wit, explanations of the plants, animals, rocks, geology, climate, history (ancient and modern), and local characters (animal and human). He eloquently describes the rich life that is actually present in an area thought by the unknowing to be barren, but populated by those animals who carefully choose their hours of activity, unseen by mad dogs, Englishmen, and casual Arches visitors. He does not downplay at all the harshness and dangers of the desert area, and seems to personally revel in the hardships it presents while providing some practical survival techniques.



*May your trails be crooked, winding, lonesome, dangerous, leading to the most amazing view. May your mountains rise into and above the clouds. May your rivers flow without end, meandering... down into a desert of red rock, blue mesas, domes and pinnacles and grottos of endless stone...where something strange and more beautiful and more full of wonder than your deepest dreams waits for you—beyond that next turning of the canyon walls.*

~E. Abbey

The author's personal view seems to be that the parks would be much better if few visitors were present. In a supposed conversation that explains his viewpoint, "Any dangerous animals out here, ranger?" "Just tourists." He presents arguments throughout the book about the value of preservation of wilderness, and the detrimental effects of human intrusions in these fragile regions.

*Cont'd. on pg. 5*



## Concert Review: Arthur Omura, Harpsichordist

By DEBORAH WEBSTER,  
CONCERT SERIES PRODUCTION MANAGER



It's mid-winter, a time for quietude and replenishing our energy reserves. Then enters the sound of the harpsichord, with its ever crisp, yet gentle sound, luring us into thoughts of sunlight and rejuvenation, while being still respectful of a state of respite. The harpsichord is a wonderful instrument, with its pure, no-nonsense tone that yet inspires a lightness of thought and spirit. Matched with the mastery of the composers of the Baroque era, the harpsichord draws you in, and you can't help but feel the sunlight warming your senses.

It's just this experience that was given to us on January 29, as **Arthur Omura** presented his harpsichord program, "The Duels," featuring pieces by Handel, Scarlatti, J.S. Bach, and Marchand. Mr. Omura gave us insight into the camaraderie and competitiveness of our four composers that underlie the beautiful collection of Baroque pieces. He presented the succession of pieces masterfully, indicating the challenge and response of each composer with the lighting and extinguishing of candles. You can read more about "The Duels" by following the link provided below the YouTube recording of the concert.

Watch this and all our broadcast performances by visiting [stpaulswc.org/concert-series-reviews](http://stpaulswc.org/concert-series-reviews).

## *Desert Solitaire* book review

*Cont'd. from pg. 4*

Abbey has written other material, mostly set in the southwest. One surprising exception is set in Hoboken, New Jersey, where, along with a description of the flora and fauna, he includes a list of some of the taverns in town. Based on the byline to his introduction to *Desert Solitaire*, portions of the book were written in one of these establishments.

When Edward Abbey died in 1989, some of his friends put him in the back of a pickup truck and illegally buried him at an undisclosed suitably scenic location far out in the desert that he loved so much. At his request, his gravestone says, "No comment."

*Desert Solitaire* is a good book to read before and/or after a trip to the area, or in an armchair, only imagining the beauty and hardships of the desert.



## Update: Your 2022 Vestry

### Tom Chaffee, Senior Warden

To serve St. Paul's as Senior Warden this year is my honor and privilege. Though a relatively new member, I have quickly grown to cherish this welcoming and giving community. Walnut Creek has been my home since moving here at the age of three-weeks, and I live here with my daughter **Alex** (18) and my son **Will** (15). Having been raised Roman Catholic, I was active at St. John Vianney, particularly with the high school youth group. I went on to study at Santa Clara University and Georgetown University Law Center. My Jesuit education instilled in me a call to community service and working for the greater good.

In 2018, while looking for a new faith community, I stumbled upon St. Paul's one random Sunday in October. A highlight for me was being

received by the Bishop at Grace Cathedral in 2019. By happenstance, **Rev. Krista** was sitting next to me at lunch, and following our meal the conversation turned to a property issue at St. Paul's. Casually, I mentioned that I was a real estate attorney and if there was ever anything I could do to help, please let me know. Thus, my journey began. Serving on the Vestry affords me the opportunity to give back to this community that has been so welcoming to me and my family. This is going to be an exciting year for St. Paul's as we pivot from responding to the ups and downs of the pandemic to preparing our parish and community to welcome those in need through our outreach activities and Ministry of Space. Having worked hard last year to identify and charter St. Paul's ministries, the Vestry will focus this year on our Stewardship pod as we work to organize our real estate and financial operations and lay a strong foundation for the future.



### Susan Burpee, Junior Warden

I'm a retired pharmacist and worked for Longs/CVS for 35 years. I adore my five grandchildren, who keep me on my toes. I also love to travel, garden, and hike.

I've been a member of St Paul's for many years. In 2021 I was elected to the Vestry and that same year was chosen to be Junior Warden. I am pleased to serve as Junior Warden again this year.

My position as Junior Warden is also referred to as The People's Warden. I love serving as the liaison between the congregation and the Vestry. Together with **Rev. Krista**, the Senior Warden, and the Vestry, I implement our goals for St. Paul's and oversee the financial aspects of the church.

*Cont'd. on pg. 7*

# Church Life

## Update: Your 2022 Vestry

*Cont'd. from pg. 6*

### **Susan Burpee, cont'd.**

Serving on the Vestry has been and will continue to be a gift in my life. I work with some incredible people, learn new skills, and see God's hope for all of us to be one community of love being worked on every day. My goal for the upcoming year is to implement our new ministry structure that was started last year. By using this new structure we can focus our time and treasure on the ministries that are most important to us in this changing world. There is so much need in our world for Christ's love to be shared and I think our mission at St Paul's is to be an example of that love. Thank you for the chance to serve. Be sure to seek out your Junior Warden if you have any questions about the Vestry or any of our ministries.

### **Jessica Beerbaum, Chief Financial Officer**

I am delighted to dust off my accounting skills and work with church leadership on our vital finances. Having been a savings and loan manager, a PTA unit treasurer, and a school office employee in charge of certain aspects of school accounting, I will draw on my relevant past experience to help advance St. Paul's financial goals. I am joining a dedicated team and look forward to working with them on this new (for me) challenge.



### **Ken Jessup, Returning Vestry Member**

This is my second time on Vestry, having first served during St. Paul's capital campaign in the mid-90s. I believe that each member should take a turn on Vestry and be involved in the workings of the church, and I feel my turn has come again.



My wife Linnea and I began attending St. Paul's when we moved to Walnut Creek in 1986. We enjoy wonderful friendships with many of the St. Paul's family. We have actively participated in food drives, retreats, Winter Nights, and outreach activities, to name a few. I like helping to complete repairs around the campus and was involved with the kitchen remodel. Over the next three years I hope we maintain focus on our outreach as well as continue our education offerings.

## Thank You, Eileen

### **St. Paul's is grateful to Eileen Mitchell for her commitment to St. Paul's Church, clearly evident in her...**

Thoughtfulness • Willingness to help • Care and compassion for parishioners • Creativity • Design and technical skills • Openness to suggestions and new ideas • Flexibility • Resourcefulness • People skills

We appreciate Eileen for her kindness and abiding goodwill, as well as her positive nature, playful sense of humor, and—for all who know her—her limitless love of greyhounds!





## The Epistle Team Asked... How Will You Prepare for Easter This Year?

### Susan Burpee

I have long held the belief that to really know the joy of Easter you must walk the walk of Lent and Holy Week. As the head of St. Paul's Altar Guild, I start the preparation of our Easter journey early. I order candles, schedule the guild for the services, and help with getting the church ready for our beautiful liturgy. My spiritual journey includes a Lenten practice such as an extra Bible study or daily meditation. It is such an honor to celebrate Christ's resurrection.



### Barbara Dawson

My husband, David and I started attending St. Paul's via Zoom during 2021. I've been singing with the choir and both of us have been warmly welcomed into the community. Lent, in preparation for Easter, is an important time for me. In addition to being intentional in my self-reflection and walking the journey towards Easter during Holy Week, David and I revisit a short story we were introduced to many years ago that exemplifies sacrifice for the sake of others. It is *Barrington Bunny* from *The Way of the Wolf: The Gospel in New Images* by Martin Dell. While it is often referred to as a Christmas story, we know it as an Easter resurrection

story. In addition to the book, the story alone can be downloaded in either written form or as a video, and we highly recommend it.

### Ginalyn Fuentes

One of the greatest human weaknesses is our indulgence of earthly things such as delicious food. Our family starts planning for Lent just before Ash Wednesday. We use Lent as a way to humble ourselves by making small sacrifices such as giving up a few of our favorite foods in remembrance of what Jesus Himself sacrificed for us. Lent also reminds us to always try to live our daily lives as best we can in reflection of Him.



### Sharon Taplin

Preparing for Easter has seemed more fitting now than during these past few years. Living through the years of this pandemic, we have had the opportunity to hope and pray and wait for the light at the end of the tunnel. Lent feels like that, a long dark period of time—a time of reflection and a time to look forward with hope. Preparing for Easter for me this year is remaining hopeful and believing that there will be light and new life ahead.



## Earth Day 2022: Invest in Our Planet

By EMILY HOPKINS

Every year on April 22, Earth Day is recognized as a time to promote awareness of and appreciation for the Earth’s environment. Founded by U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-Wisconsin) as an environmental teach-in in 1970, Earth Day is celebrated every year with thousands of events in more than 180 countries. From its beginning, the event has influenced environmental politics, triggering such national legislation as the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act.

The Earth Day 2022 theme is “Invest in Our Planet” to build a prosperous and equitable future. You can learn more about the global movement at [earthday.org/earth-day-2022](http://earthday.org/earth-day-2022).

### Bay Area groups are also holding virtual and in-person activities, including:

- **Create a Better Earth by 2050:** Sunday, April 24, in Mill Valley with art exhibits, inspiring talks, good music, and fun activities for all ages. Free registration at: [eventbrite.com/e/earth-2050-create-a-better-world-tickets-221607091777](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/earth-2050-create-a-better-world-tickets-221607091777)
- **Earth Day Celebration:** San Damiano Retreat Center in Danville on Sunday April 24 at 2:00 pm. Seeking exhibits by budding scientists and artists. Learn how the Franciscans care for creation at: [sandamiano.org/events/earthday2022](http://sandamiano.org/events/earthday2022)



I hope you enjoy Earth Day, and put into practice anything you may learn to make every day Earth Day.

## The Rev. Krista

*Cont'd. from front page*

As we sing out Alleluias in Easter, our focus will be on the amazing joy that comes with living a life of generosity. After two years of grief and change, we need a season filled with joy!

I was reminded of a mini-film called *The Other Christmas Gift* created by filmmaker Rob Bliss. It takes place in the Atlanta Metro Boy’s & Girl’s Club that mentors and supports kids, over 80% of whom live in poverty. The kids were asked what they, and their parents, wanted for Christmas. They were then presented with the very thing they asked for as well as the gift for their parents. You could imagine their faces of surprise and delight until they were posed with a dilemma: they could have only one of the items. Repeatedly, the kids sighed, rolled their eyes, groaned, and then chose the gift for their parents. One of the children said “LEGOS don’t matter. Your family does. So if it is LEGOS or family, I choose family.” Another said, “I have this opportunity to give something to my mom.” In the end, the children received both gifts and the joy that came with giving a gift was clear in their tears, eyes, and hugs. Watch the video at [youtube.com/watch?v=OnZfRh\\_7tzw/](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnZfRh_7tzw/).

May your springtide be filled with the same unbridled joy and love.

## Buffalo Chicken-Stuffed Avocados



By ALEENA BURGRABE



My family calls this recipe “Hot California Avocados,” though the official name is “Buffalo Chicken-Stuffed Avocados.” I cook religiously out of Cassy Joy Garcia’s cookbook, *Cook Once Eat All Week*. In fact, I reference her recipes so frequently that she has become an extended part of our family. Enjoy!

**Prep Time: 10 minutes; Cook Time: 15 minutes**

### Ingredients for 4 servings

- 4 medium avocados
- 1/3 cup medium-hot hot sauce
- 3 tablespoons avocado oil, mayonnaise, or salted butter
- 2 cups shredded chicken breast
- 2 green onions, sliced, divided



### Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Halve the avocados and remove the pits, then slice 1/4 inch off the bottom of each avocado to make a flat surface for the avocado to sit on. Place the avocados on a rimmed baking sheet.
3. In a bowl, whisk together the hot sauce and mayonnaise, then add the shredded chicken and about 2 tablespoons of the sliced green onions, reserving some for garnish. Toss to coat the chicken.
4. Stuff each avocado with an equal amount of the chicken mixture, then bake the stuffed avocados for 15 minutes, or until the chicken is slightly browned on top.
5. Let cool slightly, garnish with the reserved sliced green onions, and serve!



**Note:** Chips and hummus are a nice complement to this meal, but these delicious avocados also stand alone as is.

## Reminders

### Ash Wednesday Services

Wednesday, March 2  
12:00 pm, Chapel | 7:00 pm, Sanctuary

### Return to Daylight Saving Time

Sunday, March 13  
Spring forward! Move your clocks ahead.

### Monthly Vestry Meeting via Zoom

Monday, March 21 & April 18 | 6:30 pm

### St. Paul's Book Groups via Zoom

**Afternoon Group: 1:30 pm**

March 10 & April 14

**Evening Group: 7:00 pm**

March 10 & April 13

### AARP Tax-Aide

Hillcrest Congregational Church, Pleasant Hill  
By appointment only: (925) 979-5013





## Fulfilling a Critical Void: Trinity Center

By MOLLY PFAUCLOPP, CHAIR—TRINITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The need for homeless services in Contra Costa County is enormous and continues to grow. Homelessness is an extremely complex issue with far reaching impacts on our community, and requires a multi-faceted, coordinated, and systems-oriented approach. In the absence of adequate emergency shelter and permanent supportive housing in our community, programs such as Trinity Center are critical resources for essential services such as: maintaining hygiene and cleanliness, linking with behavioral and physical health services, obtaining government identification, gaining employment, applying for mainstream benefits, and accessing emergency shelter, housing navigation, and prevention/stabilization services. These are the basic steps to integrate homeless persons and those at risk for homelessness into the network of services.

Trinity Center's unique program fills a critical need by providing its services free of charge. The services are available to all homeless and/or very-low-income individuals who are not registered sex offenders, and who agree to be in community, respect fellow community members, and refrain from violence. This approach, with very low barriers to service, effectively engages persons who are chronically homeless or face multiple obstacles to housing stability, familiarizing them with the resources they need and moving them through a continuum of services.

Trinity Center, founded in 2012 by St. Paul's, Episcopal Church, Walnut Creek, has grown from a part-time service center to fulfilling a critical role day-to-day in the Contra Costa County ecosystem of homeless services. In order to continue growing and improving service to our members and community, we updated our Strategic Plan in 2021. Our priorities are to:



**2022 is off to a busy start!** Visitors at the Center have gone from 50 to 70-80 per day. With the

increasing activity and needs of the community and to help manage continuing COVID protocols, a Security Guard has been added to the Trinity Center Team. The guard works with Trinity Center staff and supplements our existing monitoring by identifying and redirecting activities as necessary, and by being a presence inside and outside Trinity Center, in the public sidewalk areas, and in the church's parking lot and the small lot in front of 1888 Trinity Avenue.

- Build upon Trinity Center Services to meet the needs of our community
- Expand partnerships to continually improve services
- Increase fundraising through expanding focus on new funding arenas and strategies
- Improve communication and outreach to share the Trinity Center story effectively
- Address infrastructure needs to ensure Trinity Center has the business capability to thrive

We greatly appreciate St. Paul's partnership and support for Trinity Center.



## COVID-19 Looking Back, Moving Forward

By GRETCHEN ROTHROCK

2022 marks year three of the pandemic. Hard to believe, right?

**Year one** was punctuated by **full stop**: shelter-in-place, social distancing, handwashing, wearing masks, wiping down your groceries, and praying (a lot!). It's important to recognize that the odds of *extinguishing* any virus are quite low. Historically, we have been able to *reduce the occurrence of viruses* by many prevention methods. One of the best methods for disease reduction/control is vaccines.

**Year two** was punctuated by the development of vaccines. Then, more praying, social distancing, handwashing, and wearing masks! The success of these vaccines has relied heavily on many factors: how quickly can the vaccines be distributed, what barriers exist to effective and equitable distribution, and finally, how rapidly does the virus change and will the vaccine remain effective?



COVID-19 infections have become part of the constellation of viruses in the environment of our state, nation, and the world. There are no barriers, short of travel bans, that effectively keep the virus from spreading from one region to another.

California will continue to be a leader in vaccination rates. This, in turn, will help with overall decreased morbidity rates. This means less infection. Less infection means less hospitalization, less severe disease, and fewer deaths. We will, however, continue to see disparities between economic groups, with poorer communities having less access to health care, and therefore vaccines. And in areas where there is also vaccine hesitancy, there are higher death rates.

One element that makes this disease so difficult to predict and control is its ability to change or develop variants. To date, vaccinated persons have been protected from severe disease from all variants detected including the widely distributed Delta variant.

**Year three:** responding to new variants. Keep praying, social distancing, handwashing, and wearing masks! In the months since beginning to think about this article, a new variant has emerged, the Omicron variant. Scientists evaluating its genomic structure know that it is much more transmissible than Delta. As of this writing, Omicron has dominated infections among the unvaccinated in hospitals and has caused breakthrough infections among vaccinated individuals across the United States.

The new normal is simply a modification of the original pattern: We must stay the course with social distancing, washing hands, getting vaccinated, and wearing masks. Keep praying!

And, as the Dalai Lama has said, "Never give up!"



# Church Life



## Vestry Highlights

By JESSICA BEERBAUM

### December 2021

**The Rev. Krista Gregoso** recapped the working Vestry meeting held Saturday, December 4 during which 2022 goals were further reviewed. These included our Ministry of Space, redefining our outreach efforts, and expanding stewardship to include fundraising events dedicated to the parish budget, all while remaining engaged in worship, prayer, and learning.

The Vestry passed the 2022 budget which directly identifies our Ministry of Space costs; sets the goal of reorganizing and streamlining office administration; and dedicates funds directly to outreach. Any deficit will be covered by Payroll Protection Program grants.

### January 2022

**The Rector's Report:** Worship will be offered online only until the COVID infection rate lowers to pre-Christmas numbers. **Tom Chaffee** will be appointed the new Senior Warden.

**Associate Rector's Report: The Rev. Lynne Sharp** reported the successes of adult formation classes and the Pastoral Care Team.

**The Audio Visual Team** presented a two-phase proposal. The goal of phase one is to improve our current presentation of worship online and in person. The Vestry voted to approve implementation of phase one with a budget of \$10,000.

**Real Estate Report:** Tom Chaffee reported that:

- Lease negotiations with My Spanish Village are beginning.
- The presence of security guards (St. Paul's overnight and Trinity Center's during the day) has resulted in fewer cars in the parking lot and other positive effects.

**Property Committee: Jim Bell** informed the Vestry that the inverters on our solar panels will be replaced in the near future. Also, the Vestry approved \$1,750 to repair the church alarm system.

**Finance:** The Vestry voted to accept an anonymous donation of \$35,000 dedicated primarily to property upgrades.

**Role of the CFO:** The Rector is looking at all financial tasks to create a more robust system. An interim CFO is needed to attend Finance Committee meetings and to report back to the Vestry.

**Exiting Vestry Members: Lisa Bell Stewart, Jim Ward, Jerry Williams, and Mary-Jane Wood** were acknowledged and thanked for three years of faithful service.



## Letting Go and Doing the Next Right Thing A Vestry Retreat Disney Style

By MELANIE CORRY, VESTRY MEMBER

When Princess Elsa sings the hit song *Let it Go* in the Disney movie *Frozen* she is proclaiming to the world that she is fully embracing the things that make her unique—specifically, her ability to control ice and snow.

What does this popular song and movie have to do with St. Paul's Vestry? In 2022 our Vestry will be building upon our stewardship theme of "Celebrating our Gifts" and, just like Elsa, embracing what makes our congregation special.

One of those things is our ongoing partnership between St. Paul's and Trinity Center. That was why it was so important for the church leadership to serve dinner at Trinity Center for Winter Nights. **The Rev. Krista** and Senior Warden **Tom Chaffee** joined with Trinity Center's Board President, **Molly Clopp**, to make the meatloaf. Also on the menu were potato gratin and green beans.

Just as Elsa's and Anna's story didn't end with *Frozen*, the Vestry's work wasn't done on Friday night. The group continued a masked and socially distanced gathering held in the new meeting rooms at St. Paul's Commons. One of our themes for the day came from a song in *Frozen II* titled *The Next Right Thing*. In the song, Princess Anna is near defeat but stands and continues onward, singing about just focusing on doing the next right thing in her journey to find her sister.



Saturday's session via Zoom

With ever-changing COVID guidelines these past two years, planning too far into the future can feel daunting, so your Vestry is committed, just like Anna, to working diligently to do the next right thing as we navigate our way through 2022.

Throughout the year we will be focusing on the many facets of stewardship. Our goals include taking a close look at the various funds of the church to make sure we are being good stewards of our financial gifts. Members of the Vestry will also be dedicated to the other two tenets of stewardship, time and talent. We will be exploring ways to make sure we

all stay connected in person and online and will work to find new and innovative ways to expand our outreach into the community.

Your St. Paul's Vestry is proud to serve the church and lead us forward as we all strive to embrace our gifts and simply keep doing the next right thing.



### Holy Week at St. Paul's

**April 10: Palm Sunday**

7:30 am, Chapel | 9:30 am, Sanctuary

**April 14: Maundy Thursday**

7:00 pm, Sanctuary

**April 15: Good Friday**

Noon, Chapel | 7:00 pm, Sanctuary

**April 16: Easter Vigil, Saturday**

7:00 pm, Sanctuary

**April 17: Easter Sunday**

7:30 am, Chapel | 9:30 am, Sanctuary  
11:00 am, Joyful Noise, Sanctuary

## Inspiration

**From the 2019 Easter Sermon of The Most Reverend Michael B. Curry**

John's Gospel says...early in the morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene and some of the other women went to the tomb.  
...John's Gospel says it was dark. It was dark. That's not just the time of day in John's Gospel. The darkness in John is the domain of evil. In John's Gospel when Judas leaves the Last Supper to betray Jesus, John inserts a parenthetical remark. When Judas leaves to betray him, John says, "And it was night." The darkness is the domain of wrong, of hatred, of bigotry, of violence, the domain of sin and death and horror.

... in the silence of the night, in the moments of despair, in the moments of the worst darkness, God had done something incredible.

God had raised Jesus from the dead.

Christ is risen.

The Lord is risen, indeed.

**The Epistle Editors:**

Rhea Williams, Sheri Grosjean, Eileen Mitchell, Ned Soares. The Epistle Team wishes to thank all contributors to this issue. For article ideas and suggestions, please email [epistle@stpaulswc.org](mailto:epistle@stpaulswc.org).



TIME DATED MATERIAL  
PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY  
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Sunday Services

7:30 am: Chapel

9:30 am: Sanctuary &  
streaming live on

Facebook & YouTube

11:00 am: Joyful Noise

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