

St. Paul's Episcopal Church



CHRISTMAS
Joy



A Monthly Newsletter

November 2011

St. Paul's Church Statement of Mission and Ministry

St. Paul's Church, Wickford, is a loving community of Christians seeking to be faithful to God and renewed through the Gospel. We of St. Paul's aim to love God through:

- The sharing of the sacraments, worship and prayer,
- Ministering to people and spreading God's word,
- Seeking to become better stewards of God's gifts,
- Working toward the Kingdom of God within us and in the world.

I WANT TO WALK AS A CHILD OF THE LIGHT



I want to walk as child of the light
I want to follow Jesus.
God set the stars to give light to the world.
The star of my life is Jesus.

I want to see the brightness of God.
I want to look at Jesus.
Clear Sun of Righteousness, shine on my path.
and show me the way to the Father.

In Him there is no darkness at all.
The night and the day are both alike.
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.
Shine in my hear, Lord Jesus.

Written by Kathleen Thomerson (Episcopalian organist), 1966

*Brilliant God, you created Jesus to be your light to the world.
May Christ's light shine through the clutter of this season, touching all people, touching me.
Let the light of Christ shine into the depths and corners of my heart.*

Amen

*From the
Interim Rector*



Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself? I will with God's help.

Dear Friends,

Advent has begun, and yet the joy of baptisms on All Saints Sunday is still reverberating in my soul. We had a wondrous time on All Saints: lots of kids; lots of familiar and unfamiliar faces gathered to present and welcome the two newest members of St. Paul's; excellent music with strings, a trumpet and kettle drums encouraging all of us to enter with the choir into the celebration. The refrain in the baptismal covenant we recited together— *I will with God's help* – speaks to the promise that attends the commitment: God will work with us to reveal and fulfill God's purposes. And now, as we look into Advent, we are persisting in our search for the Christ among us, the Christ seeking out and serving us, even as we seek and serve Christ. God's evolving mission in the world, and the church's ability to serve that mission, depends upon our willingness to be transformed by the spirit of Christ so that we may more fully recognize the Christ, the anointed one, in all those who populate our congregation, our family, our community, our world. How does this happen? It seems to me that by offering ourselves to God, and relaxing into God's commandment that we are be loving of our neighbor, we trust God to work with us and our priorities and our energies begin to shift. Feeling the care of God for us, trusting that we are held by the God of promise, we begin to find our courage renewed, and our hearts softened. Our eyes and ears and our soul relaxing, opening, we begin to detect the Christ among us, and present, like traces of gold, in our neighbors. We seek that elemental goodness of creation, we find it, and we serve it. We detect it in playfulness, in generosity of spirit, in gentleness, in courage, in patience, in nurturing, in creativity,

and in so many other ways that reveal to us the spirit of Christ alive in the world, alive in us and in our neighbor. We enjoy it, we name it, we bring it into the light. We find it at the grocery check-out counter, in a bank, at a restaurant, at the gym, in hospitals, in nursing homes, and in so many other places. We affirm the gracious presence of Christ in and through our neighbor with the "light touch" of tuning in to those qualities that are aligned with the spirit of Christ, that bear witness to his continuing presence in the world.

This is the church of the past, the present and the future: rooted and grounded in Christ alive in and through us for the good of the world, in the service of God's mission to reveal freedom, unity, justice and peace. We look to the Advent of Christ in the world—once in a manger, finally at the close of creation, and incarnate in you, in me, and in all those we meet. I will continue to find these traces of gold in the world today, with God's help.

Peace.
David+

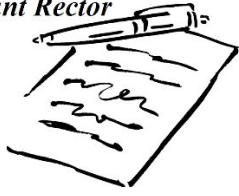
St. Nicholas

On December 6th we recognize Nicholas, Bishop of Myra in the 4th century. Myra is now the western part of Turkey. Nicholas had three daughters for whom he could not provide suitable dowries. Stories tell that he would throw a bag of gold into a man's window (or down a chimney in colder climates) saving his daughters from shame. Thus Nicholas became known as an anonymous gift giver.

Almighty God, who in your love gave to your servant Nicholas of Myra a perpetual name for deeds of kindness on land and sea: Grant, we pray, that your Church may never cease to work for the happiness of children, the safety of sailors, the relief of the poor, and the help of those tossed by tempests of doubt or grief; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God,



From the
Assistant Rector



Friends,
We've got a lot going on this December. A small group of us are joining with a few other parishes around the diocese and heading down to NightWatch hosted by the Cathedral of St. John the

Divine in New York City. The middle and high school youth will be going bowling on the 4th, the High School will meet together for some conversation and fun on the 11th and the Middle School will gather for movie and a dinner on the 18th. We are also invited to help out with our Christmas Basket Program on the 21st and 22nd. I encourage you all to come out and join us for these events. We will also continue to meet on Wednesday evenings from 5:30-7. These meetings will be a little different this month; we will gather with those of the parish taking part in Wednesday Night Live and celebrate the Eucharist from 5:30-6 in the chapel, then have dinner and hang out from 6-7. As I mentioned last month we will no longer meet on the third Wednesday of the month and we will not be meeting the Wednesday after Christmas, so no Wednesday meetings on the 21st or the 28th. This month, on December 4th from 11:30-12:30 Haleigh Freeburg and Rachel Nutt will be giving a presentation on Invisible Children, a program designed to raise awareness about how children are affected by war in Uganda in the hope of ending that war and its affect on these children. Please come out and support this program and Haleigh and Rachel's involvement with it.

If you are interested in any of these events or have any questions give me a call at 294-4357 or email at assistant@stpaulswickford.org.

- 12/2-3- Diocesan Youth Nightwatch Trip to NYC
- 12/4- 11:30-12:30 Invisible Children Presentation in Parish Hall
- 12/4- Youth Bowling Night
- 12/11- High School Youth Group (5-7)
- 12/-18 Middle School Youth Movie and Dinner night (5-7)
- 12/21& 12/28- No Wednesday Night Youth Group

Yours in Christ,
Patrick



A message from the Annual Pledge Team...

Pledge season is now upon us. You have received the mailing from the pledge team, read the Communicant articles and heard wonderful, inspiring

sermons on stewardship. We have offered thoughts on why pledging is a spiritual activity and how, through pledging, we can be closer to God. Now, in addition, I would like to offer a very practical reason for pledging: it costs approximately \$45,000 per month to run St. Paul's Church. Our important missions and ministries, our beloved Clergy, our incredible music during worship, and our Church support staff are all possible because of the pledges received each month. The day to day upkeep and operations of our buildings: the heat, the electricity, the phone lines – less spiritual sounding, but no less vital to the life of St. Paul's, all function because our pledges make it so. ***The bounty we have at St. Paul's to do the work of Christ in our community and in the world comes from the bounty we are willing to share with each other.*** Our commitment and generosity directly translates into the work we do here together in God's name. To continue with this mission, to expand it even, requires everyone's participation.

As we come close to calling our new rector and stepping into our future together, let us move forward with generous and grateful hearts. Have a blessed and joyful Christmas season.

Yours in Christ,
Tabitha Jorgensen on behalf of the Annual Pledge Team



**From the Director of Music,
Organist, and Choirmaster**

Advent is upon us! Please join us for **St. Paul's Festival of Advent Lessons and**

Carols on Sunday December 11 at 4:00pm at St. Paul's. St. Paul's Parish Choir and Youth Choir will lead the congregation in songs of the season and also offer music by Benjamin Britten, Andrew Carter, Orlando Gibbons, and Paul Manz with guest instrumentalists. The service will be followed by a reception in the parish hall prepared by St. Paul's exquisite hospitality committee.

Many thanks to our extraordinary choir members who continually give of their time and talents to the glory of God. Thank you to our dedicated choral intern Bridget Nixon who lends her many gifts to St. Paul's Youth Choir. Also thank you to the supportive choir family members and friends who have faithfully shared in commitment to the worship life at St. Paul's

St. Paul's annual Epiphany Evensong will take place January 8 at 7pm at St. Paul's Church with a reception following. The Parish Choir will sing music of Thomas Morley and Josef Rheinberger and be joined by the three Magi! Invite a friend to this magical service.

It is truly a joy to serve at St. Paul's. St. Paul's is such an amazing place because of YOU, the people who ARE St. Paul's Church! Thank you for your continued prayers and support of the music ministry at St. Paul's.

Wishing you peace and happiness this Christmas season!
Mark



Please join us for Christmas Eve services with special music!

Christmas Eve Schedule: Dec. 24

3:00pm Children's Pageant and Eucharist

5:00pm Carols and Eucharist with St. Paul's Youth Choir

7:00pm Choral prelude and Carols

7:30pm Choral Eucharist: St. Paul's Parish Choir sings Mozart's Missa Brevis in G and music by Whitacre

10:00pm Choral prelude and Carols

10:30pm Choral Eucharist: St. Paul's Parish Choir sings Mozart's Missa Brevis in G, and music by Whitacre





It's that time of year again, time for the Christmas pageant. After surveying the families of the Sunday school, it became obvious that families love the tradition of the pageant on Christmas Eve. When we look past the pushing and shoving in

the sheep section and the occasional fumbled lines, there is just something about the "holy chaos" that really brings home the true meaning of Christmas. So it is with delight that we will again be sharing the Christmas pageant during the 3 pm service.

Pageant registration forms went home in November with the children, and are due back on December 4. If your child has not already received a sign up form, please feel free to contact me at home 294-9908 or during Sunday school hours to sign-up. We will take registrations through the last rehearsal. Keep in mind though, speaking parts are given to the oldest children first and need to be decided before Dec. 11. If possible, children who have speaking parts need to be at all rehearsals. Please contact me if your child cannot attend rehearsals.

November brought a time of Thanksgiving. Thank you to Deacon Jan for speaking to us about stewardship and the importance of sharing what we have with those who are less fortunate. This subject coincided nicely with "Jammie's Grammys" PJ collection and December's ingathering of food for the Christmas baskets. The items collected on Stewardship Sunday benefitted the NK Food Pantry, the Salvation Army, and the Exeter Animal Shelter. Thank you to all the children who shared items with those less fortunate in our local area. We're also looking forward to sharing our talents as we make Christmas cards to accompany the food baskets. The children also shared all the things they are thankful for on slips of paper and the chains showed just how blessed we are here at St. Paul's.

On November 13th, Father Patrick and almost 100 children, youth and adults participated in our first Sunday School Eucharist in the Parish Hall. Patrick explained each part of the service and helped the children to understand communion as coming together for a family meal. The children were able to learn the importance of this sacrament in a caring and non-threatening environment. They learned how to hold their hands or cross themselves, as well as the "fancy

church names" for each item. The teachers were thrilled to be able to share in communion with the Sunday school community. Depending on clergy availability, we are hoping to be able to continue with this wonderful service monthly. The next scheduled Eucharist is December 4th. Any parent who has questions or concerns, please call me at home or see me on Sunday mornings. Thank you Patrick for making this available to the children and youth, to Sindy Hempstead for sharing a story with the children to start the service, Rozanne Fuller and Alicia Cranston for providing the music, and Jayne McBride for being our chalice bearer; it was a great day.

This is a wonderful and joyous time here in the Sunday school. If you would like your child to join us on Sunday mornings, please bring them over to the Parish Hall on Sunday mornings. It is never too late to register and friends are always welcome. We have so many great things planned for the months ahead, all showing how God's love is at work today. The pageant is coming quickly; don't miss out on this wonderful celebration of the Christmas story. The real meaning of Christmas is seen in the angelic faces of the little ones. Join us on Sunday mornings and during the Christmas Eve service. It is a magical experience.

Important Sunday School Dates

Regular Sunday School Dec. 4, 11, 18

Sunday School Eucharist Dec. 4

Community Worship Dec. 25, Jan. 1

Children's Pageant will be held during the 3 pm. Service on Dec. 24th. Participating children are asked to arrive by 2:15. Full Rehearsal will be Saturday Dec. 17th, 9:30-11am. (Sheep are asked to arrive at 10:30 am.). Speaking parts will also rehearse Dec. 11th, and 18th during regular Sunday school hours.

Lorí



St. Paul's "Weekday" Nursery School

A few years ago, St. Paul's Nursery School (SPNS) began implementing the new Rhode Island Early Learning Standards (RIELS) into our program. RIELS provides an introduction to academics with an emphasis on purposeful play and exploration. It is aligned with a program we were currently using, the "Creative Curriculum". The Early Learning Standards were developed as a national, and later, statewide framework for preschools. It consists of standards, goals and expectations for all young children ages 3 to 5 to ensure they enter kindergarten ready to learn and succeed. Our entire staff has been trained and certified in the RIELS. Let me explain further what the RI ELS are all about.

The RI Early Learning Standards:

- Were developed in partnership with The RI Departments of: Education; Children, Youth and Families; Health; Human Services; Head Start; Kids-Count; and the University of Rhode Island
- Are based on current early childhood educational research and best teaching practices.
- Promote high quality early childhood programs.
- Provide information to families, teachers and administrators on what young children should know, understand and be able to do before entering kindergarten.
- Guide the selection of assessment tools that are appropriate for learners from a variety of backgrounds with differing abilities.

The RIELS are divided into **Eight Domains** including:

- a. **Approaches to Learning;** (i.e. asking questions, showing curiosity, displaying positive attitudes.)
- b. **Social and Emotional Development;** (i.e. sense of belonging to family and community, making friends, interacting with others, showing self-control.)
- c. **Language Development and Communication;** (i.e. talking, listening, singing.)
- d. **Literacy;** (i.e. being read to, understanding words carry a message, name recognition, developing skills in writing.)
- e. **Mathematics;** (i.e. measuring, counting, patterning, shape recognition, problems solving.)
- f. **Science;** (i.e. curiosity about the natural world, how things work, asking questions, observing and recording their findings and discussing their conclusions.)
- g. **Creativity;** (i.e. expressing themselves through pretend play, painting, building, and music.)
- h. **Physical Health and Development;** (i.e. young children's future health and well-being are directly related to strengthening their large and small muscles, using their senses and practicing healthy behaviors.)

Play appears as the first Learning Goal in each of the eight domains. The Early Learning Standards reflect Rhode Island's strong belief in the important role of play in how children learn. Through play, with peers, children enhance the learning of skills, knowledge and dispositions that guarantees success in later schooling.

Hopefully this gives you a sense of what we provide here at SPNS for the children of St. Paul's and children from the surrounding communities. On December 8, at 11:00 the SPNS preschool children we will be entertaining the St. Paul's Seniors during their Christmas luncheon upstairs in the Parish House. This is but one demonstration of three of the ELS domains mentioned above, (Social and Emotional Development, making community friends, Language and Communication, singing and Creativity, decorating the tree with ornaments made by the children). Come and visit us and watch the learning taking place.

We have a limited number of openings left for this school year 2011-2012. We are currently conducting tours and taking registrations for the coming September 2012, (295-7320).

Blessings, *Linda*



At the October meeting the Vestry appointed the Nominating Committee to prepare the slate for election of officers and Vestry members and delegates to the Diocesan Convention at the 2012 Annual Meeting. Committee members are Dick Lewis, Ann Waring, Cheryl Suglia, Mark Cranston and Leslie Kershaw. Parishioners who feel called to serve in Parish leadership may self-nominate or be nominated by other parishioners using a nomination packet available in the Church office, in the Narthex or on the website (for information only). The packet contains an information sheet detailing the qualifications for elected leadership positions as mandated by the Canons of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of RI. Those making nominations of others must also meet those requirements. **The deadline for nominations is December 8, 2011.** Positions to be elected at the Annual Meeting are one Clerk, four Vestry members and four delegates to Convention.

Vestry Roles, Responsibilities and Visibility

What is the Role of the Vestry of St. Paul's Church?

As in all Episcopal parishes, the Vestry is the elected governing body of the parish. In addition to the Rector, the Vestry is composed of the Officers (the Senior and Junior Wardens, the Clerk and the Treasurer) and twelve others, each of whom has been qualified as a member of the parish corporation of St. Paul's and elected at the annual meeting of the corporation. The goal of the Vestry is the following:

To discern, embrace and communicate the vision toward which God is drawing St. Paul's Church;

Encourage the structures, organizations and activities within the parish that support and uphold the realization of this vision.

To that end, and so that the mission and ministry of St. Paul's may proceed in peace and with vigor, the Vestry has canonically specified responsibilities for the stewardship of church money and property and for working with the rector on personnel management and program development and oversight. The Vestry is a team ministry within St. Paul's, and members of the Vestry each accept particular duties and responsibilities that provide active guidance and support of the overall life of the Parish.

Upon the departure of a rector, the Vestry is also responsible for calling an interim, and for the election of a new rector, each with the assent of the bishop.

Members of the Vestry are elected at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Vestry Responsibilities and Visibility

Be open and willing to share your faith journey with others and to witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ in your life.

Attend church services regularly.

Prepare for, attend, and participate in monthly Vestry meetings held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. and attend occasional special Vestry meetings and retreats as scheduled. Speak up on issues of importance.

Support stewardship to the fullest extent possible, working toward the tithe, pledging to the church, and participating as fully as possible in all other fundraising projects.

Serve as a canvasser in the Every Member Canvass.

Serve in leadership positions and undertake special assignments willingly and enthusiastically when asked.

Serve as the Vestry liaison as an active member of a team ministry at St. Paul's.

Be available to help greet and welcome newcomers to the church community, and support coffee hour and special parish life activities as fully as possible and wear specially marked Vestry nametags at these events to increase Vestry visibility.

St. Paul's Men's Group

The St. Paul's Men's Group continues to meet on Thursday nights from 7PM to 8:30PM (although we often run a little over) every week, barring holidays, and is open to all men who are members of St. Paul's and over the age of 18. We do have room for 2-3 more members at present. Our group is open-ended and essentially leaderless by design. All topics are fair game for discussion. It is meant to provide a friendly atmosphere for our members and can help break the isolation many of us may experience. We support each other through tough times, and celebrate the good. There is no fee, other than a willingness to share a portion of your life, at your pace, and participate in our small group without pressure. If you are isolated, lonely, out of work, have financial difficulties, or are just going through a rough patch in your life, we would enjoy meeting you. If you would like more information before dropping in, call Jim Carleton at [401.885.4621](tel:401.885.4621), before 9PM any day of the week.

November 2011 Christian Action Notes

In November, we designated \$316.73 each to St Mary's Home and W.A.R.M.

In addition, we will give \$1,000 to support the Jonnycake Center in Peace Dale. This organization offers a breadth of services including an emergency food pantry, holiday dinners, and school vacation breakfast and lunch programs. In 2010, they provided over 300,000 meals, more than three times the number distributed in 2006. In addition, they offer clothing and household items, teen programs, early childhood resources and referral to the pet food pantry of the Animal Rescue League of South County. For more information: www.jonnycakecenter.org/welcome.html

This year, St Paul's will man the **Salvation Army kettle** in front of Dave's Wickford on Saturday, **December 3** from 9:45-5:15 p.m (**not Decemeber 10th** as originally published!) If you would like to participate in this holiday tradition, please contact **Kathleen Godley** at **294-1206** or kcg88@verizon.net.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Godley



O Little Town of Bethlehem

In 1865, a young American preacher named Phillips Brooks spent time in and around the fields of Bethlehem. On Christmas Eve, he attended worship in the Church of the Nativity, located on the site where tradition says Jesus was born.

Brooks was so spiritually touched by the experience that he later wrote a hymn for children to sing on Christmas Eve in his Philadelphia church. Lewis Redner, the church organist and Sunday school superintendent, composed the music for the beloved hymn, "O Little Town of Bethlehem." Today it appears in most denominational hymnals. Brooks, a giant of a man physically (6'6" tall), was known throughout America as an eloquent and dominant force in the pulpit.

There is a large statue of the gifted man of God in front of Boston's famous Trinity Church, where Brooks last served. His death in 1893 was a major event in Boston. Upon learning of his passing, a 5-year-old girl exclaimed, "Oh, Mama, how happy the angels will be."



If you would like to ensure the future of St. Paul's through a gift in your will or estate plan, please contact the office at 294-4357 to request a Legacy brochure.





Reaching out to the community
in which we live....

CHRISTMAS BASKETS - 2010

As we enter the holiday seasons this year, with our blessings for the joys, sorrows and the gift of life we have shared this past year, let us all take a few moments out of our moment in life to care for those in our community who need a special touch. St. Paul's CHRISTMAS BASKETS touch a lot of those people. Again this year, 100 families will receive a basket full of food for their CHRISTMAS dinner and enough extra for several other meals (breakfast, lunches and dinners). These special families also represent approximately 300 people in our community. Just think... over 300 people in our town receiving a bit of love from everyone who shares in the CHRISTMAS BASKETS from our community of St. Paul's.

Listed here are several specific ways you and your families can share in St. Paul's CHRISTMAS BASKETS for 2010:

Your cost of one complete food basket is \$45. You may wish to give money for a full basket or part of one or you may choose to donate a **frozen** turkey or roaster. **Starting with the THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE and continuing to December 18, you may bring your donations from the food staple list to church.** There will be a designated area for all CHRISTMAS BASKET food donations. The financial donation is used for purchasing all the perishable and produce items.

Families will be needed to pray for our special families, and VOLUNTEERS will be needed to help assemble the baskets. Those of you who have volunteered in the past know what joy is shared - those of you who are new to the parish or have never participated before.... well, you don't know what you've been missing!

If you and your family can give in any of the ways offered, please check the appropriate place on the VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION slip and return it to the Parish Office or place it in the collection plate as soon as possible.

FOOD STAPLES NEEDED FOR EACH BASKET

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 40-oz. Jiffy Baking Mix | Instant Oatmeal |
| 16-oz. Mayonnaise | Cookies |
| Cranberry Sauce | Jiffy Pie Crust Mix |
| Christmas Candy | 1-lb. cans Shortening |
| Kellogg's Corn Flakes | 48-oz. Bottle Canola Oil |
| Juicy Juice | Pancake Syrup |
| Stuffing Mix | Peanut Butter |
| 5-lb. Sugar | Canned Yams |
| Popping Corn | Pumpkin Pie Filling |
| Grape Jelly | 5-lb. All Purpose Flour |

In addition to the staples, the Christmas Baskets will include the following perishables and produce:

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Bologna | Eggs |
| Margarine | Milk |
| Bacon | Orange Juice |
| Hot-dogs | Bread |
| American Cheese | Turkey or Roaster |
| Carrots | Oranges |
| Bananas | Apples |
| Lettuce | Potatoes |
| Onions | Squash |
| Turnip | Celery |

I have agreed to share God's love in the following ways:

- FOOD STAPLES
- PRAY FOR A FAMILY
- FINANCIAL AID (Please indicate "for Christmas Baskets" on your check or envelope and include your envelope number)
- **FROZEN TURKEY** or **ROASTER**
(To be delivered to the Parish House on **Thursday December 22 by 9 a.m.**)



VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION

Pack Baskets, Wednesday, 12/21 at 7 p.m. _____

Pack Baskets, Thursday, 12/22 at 9 a.m. _____

Pray for a family _____

Help Deliver Baskets, Thursday, 12/22 at 11:30 a.m. _____

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

I wish to contribute one (or more) basket(s) \$_____.

I wish to contribute \$_____ toward a basket.

Bring **FROZEN** Turkey or Roaster, **Thursday, December 22 by 9 a.m.**

(Please indicate Turkey _____ Roaster _____)

Name _____ Phone _____

Envelope # _____