

The Epistle

SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

January/February 2007

FOUNDED 1883

*The Reverend Dr. Carol M. Flett
Priest-in-Charge*

Dear Friends:

I really enjoyed our celebrations of Advent and Christmas this year. Christmas Eve was wonderful! As I continue into my second year with you, planning events and worship become easier and more joyful as I now know and understand what works for you, for me and for our guests and visitors. Also, our new Parish Office Administrator, Joan Whalen, has been working with us now for a couple of months and she has made such a difference. She has great computer skills, has organized the office files and storage areas, initiated the renewal of a lease for an improved photocopier, and can multi-task with grace and humor! We have new phones and a new fiber-optic internet service (FIOS), which have improved our ability to communicate quickly and effectively.

Now we enter into a new calendar year – 2007, and a new liturgical season – Epiphany. Epiphany lasts from January 6 (12 days after Christmas through the Tuesday before Lent begins. Thus it begins on January 6 and ends on Tuesday, February 20, 2007. The general theme of the Epiphany Season is the manifestation of the presence of God in Jesus of Nazareth. The word *epiphany* is Greek for *manifestation*. In most churches, Bible readings and sermons during this time of the year deal with the events that eventually fully revealed Jesus' identity, beginning with the arrival of the Magi in Bethlehem at his birth, then his baptism by John the Baptist, until to his Transfiguration on the Mount with Peter, James and John.

The question for all of us during this Epiphany season is, "How has the fullness of Jesus as the Christ been revealed to you in your life? Is Jesus an ongoing revelation for you? Or are you doubting or wondering when or if you will fully appreciate Jesus as the Christ? What prayer or worship experience, or study or pastoral ministry do you need to enhance this revelation for you?" Please reflect on these questions and write to me revflett@yahoo.com or call me to visit and pray with you, or let me suggest something that you might use in prayer or study. We live in interesting and challenging times as people of faith who live in a pluralistic community and world. As we are learning about other world religions and hear critiques of our own tradition and denomination, where are you on your faith journey as a Christian? What do you need to deepen your Christian faith and yet be affirming of the truth and value of the other religions of your neighbors and coworkers? Please talk to me, visit with me and let me know how you are doing in your Epiphany journey.

Faithfully yours in Christ,
Carol

****CHRISTMAS EVE THANK YOUs****

To the Altar Guild who arranged the poinsettias, polished the brass and silver and set the altar. To Reiko and the Adult Choir for the extra hours rehearsing Christmas music which made the worship service glorious. To Eliza Blay and other teachers who spent time rehearsing the children for the pageant, which made it a joyful and (amusing) event. To Amy Radin, Joan Brandmahl and Liza Meyer who spent the fall making new costumes for the Pageant, which made the

children appear as very spiffy animals, shepherds and kings! And a thank you to Joan Whalen, our Parish Office Administrator, for the extra effort of putting the pageant booklet together and the extra bulletins!

ANNUAL MEETING

SUNDAY JANUARY 21, 2007

- This year the Annual Report was sent electronically to each member on our email list and hard copies were distributed at the meeting. Hard copies of the report are available in the main office.

The Priest-in-charge called the meeting to order at 11:00 am, preceded by one worship service at 9:30 am

- The 2007 Parish Budget was presented and accepted with appreciation to the Treasurer and Finance committee. The budget for 2007 includes the Pledge income of \$ 99,141 from 43 pledges, and plate offering of \$2000 (58.66% of the Budget); other sources of income include rental of the rectory and apartment - \$44,000; fees from outside groups - \$6,000; and \$21,288 from interest, dividends, and the reserve fund. It is a balanced budget.
- Several committee reports were accepted with appreciation to the Priest-in-charge, Music Director, Christian Formation for Children Director, chairs of Stewardship, Outreach, Worship, Hospitality, Meditation Garden, Publicity, Faith and the Environment, Knitting ministry.
- **New Vestry members** were unanimously elected:
Sr. Warden – Joan Brandmahl (elected for 1 year)
Jr. Warden – Bernice Cramer (1 year)
Lee Hatfield – Treasurer (1 year)
David Montgomery – Clerk (1 year)
Betsy Blagdon (3 years)
Margaret Hummel (2 years)
Betty Murray (2 years)
Ellie Pandorf
Richard Pearce (3 years)
Tim Dunn (continues for 1 more year)

Chris Meyer – Asst. Treasurer

Phil Whitbeck - Diocesan delegate to Diocesan Convention and parish representative to the Deanery Assembly

Outgoing Vestry members, Phil Whitbeck, Laura Powers-Patey and JoAnn Grigoli were thanked.

Parishioners who have given exceptional amounts of time and talent were recognized and thanked: Keith Hatfield, Eliza Blay and David Montgomery.

The Search Committee was officially decommissioned and thanked for their work of creating an outstanding Parish Profile that will be used in the discernment process of the future of St. Paul's. Chris Meyer, Joan Brandmahl, Chris Gruener, Maeve Ward, Betsy Blagdon, Kate McKone-Sweet and David Queenan.

- **Property Report:** Joan Brandmahl reported that there are plans to totally renovate the main office, including new office furniture and a new computer; and to renovate the upstairs bathroom and sexton's closet to be converted into a kitchenette. Sarah Conger has developed a plan and contacted experienced contractors for the work in the office. That work will take place as soon as possible. The work on the bathroom and kitchenette will probably take place during the summer when the construction would not affect parish programs and events.
- Phil Whitbeck reported on the work of the Bridging Committee. This committee consists of equal number of members from St. Paul's and St. John's and both Priests-in-charge. There are plans to share the worship services of Ash Wed and Holy Week. In an effort to save \$ and deepen our relationship with St. John's, whenever Carol or

or Tim are away on vacation or at a conference, services will be cancelled at their parish and everyone is encouraged to worship at the other parish. E.g. Feb. 11 and during the summer.

WORSHIP MEETING

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 2007
12 NOON – 1 PM

An open meeting to review and discuss the worship services of the fall, Advent and Christmas, and to make suggestions for Lent and Easter. How has worshipping with St. Paul's enhanced or diminished your spiritual journey? What suggestions would you make that would deepen your spiritual experience in worship? E.g. your participation in Choir, or as a lector or Lay Eucharistic minister, etc. Or what hymns, prelude/postlude, anthems, prayers, silence, sermons, guest preachers, a variety of Eucharistic prayers, (New Zealand Prayer Book, or Enriching our Worship, or Book of Common Prayer), bread or wafers do you prefer?. Our priest-in-charge is canonically responsible for the decisions in planning worship, but she welcomes suggestions. Come and share your ideas.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

The January/February schedule for the children's Christian formation classes are as follows:

Jan. 28 - classes will be held

Feb. 4 - classes will be held

Feb. 11 - classes will be held

Feb. 18 - no church school classes

Feb. 25 - no church school classes

CHOIR...la la la la!

January:

Sunday, Jan. 28 at 9:30 am -- rehearsal for 10:30 service

February:

Sundays, at 9:30 am -- rehearsal for 10:30 am service

****Thursdays, at 7:00 pm -- regular weekly rehearsal****

Children's choir rehearsal for January:

Thursday, January 25 at 5:30 pm -- rehearsal

Sunday, January 28 at 10:00 am -- warm up for Singing at 10:30 am service

Please encourage your children to join in the singing! Reiko

WARDENS' REPORT

The vestry meeting was held at Phil Whitbeck's house on Wednesday, December 13, 2006. In attendance were Lee Hatfield, Laura Powers-Patey, JoAnne Grigoli, Sarah Conger, David Montgomery, Phil Whitbeck, and Joan Brandmahl

Phil Whitbeck began the evening with a prayer. Sarah Conger presented her ideas for the renovation of the church administrator's office. The vestry enthusiastically approved her recommendations for the furniture, the furniture layout, the rugs, and painting of the wall and wainscoting color scheme. Glass panels will be installed in Carol and Joan's office doors as part of the church safety program. Laura Powers-Patey and Keith Hatfield will assemble the furniture that we are purchasing from Ikea for the office. David Oliphant will work with Al Totten, our sexton, on the demolition of the office closet and drawers. Construction of the office space will begin in mid-January.

David Montgomery's minutes were accepted. The hire letter for Joan Whalen, our new office administrator, was finalized and Joan is now officially part of the POSP's family. We all welcome her and look forward to working with her. I am sure you will all hear from Joan at one time or another. By the first of the year, we will also be finalizing our letter of agreement with Reiko and the contract with Down Under Yoga. The CORI application materials have been submitted. A big thanks to Laura Patey-Powers and David Montgomery for making this happen. The vestry discussed a request from the Korean evangelical church of Brookline to rent space at POSP's. They asked for office space for their rector, use of the parish hall every morning for prayer service, Sunday evening for fellowship and the use of the church on Sunday afternoon for services. A small rental fee was offered. After much discussion and reflection, the vestry voted not to pursue a rental relationship with them due to space and cost limitations. In Carol's absence, Joan and Phil gave her PIC report, which was accepted.

Phil presented an update on the stewardship pledge drive which resulted in an increased number of pledges for FY2007 but a decrease in total dollars pledged due to the departure of a few substantial pledging families. There are still several pledges outstanding and we are hoping to make up the \$2,000 deficit. Joan and Phil have been working on recruiting new vestry members for the coming year. They are confident that all the open positions will be filled. Joan, Phil and Lee will work on putting together a parish budget for FY2007 that will be presented to the vestry at the January meeting for approval. It was agreed that a \$40 sexton fee will be charged to parishioners who wish to rent the parish hall for a personal event. The vestry plans to recognize the Search Committee at the Annual Meeting for all the preliminary work they did for the new rector search. Keith Hatfield, who has put a yeoman's effort into the Belize Trip, reported that enthusiasm is not particularly high at this moment and it is, most likely, that a spring 2007 trip will not happen. We thank Keith for all the work he has done keeping this project going. Lee gave a positive Treasurer's report and is looking forward to putting the 2007 parish budget together with a revised format. Joan Brandmahl gave the property report. The parish stove needs to be repaired. There is a constant smell of gas and the dishwasher needs to be replaced. Before we replace both the stove and the dishwasher, a final decision needs to be made on constructing a small kitchenette in the parish hall. The boiler did not pass the insurance company's inspection requirement. Joan will contact a plumber to evaluate and make any necessary repairs. Sarah Conger is working on updating the contact list of all the church's service providers. She has also met with Joseph's Cleaner's regarding the removal of stain in the rug in Carol's office. Sarah, Joan and Amy Radin will review the annual list of items that need to be undertaken by the property manager to see which ones could be assigned to Al Totten, our sexton. This would take some of the burden of the smaller tasks off of the property manager's plate. Phil Whitbeck reported that the Bridging Committee will meet on January 8th. Phil will share his idea of pursuing shared service contracts with the committee in an effort to get better pricing. The Christian Formation Committee is working on two forums for the winter/spring series: The Power of Forgiveness in February and Stepfamilies in March. The Spirituality Committee ran a Buddhism prayer and meditation instruction led by John McDargh and Chris Gruener. Some 20-30 people from St. Paul's and St. John's attended. Evangelism reported new banner signs are on their way and suggested some changes to the font used for the weekly bulletin. It was noted what a wonderful job Eliza Blay has been doing organizing and preparing for the Christmas pageant. She is to be honored for such a wonderful contribution to the parish.

The next meeting will be at Phil Whitbeck's (his last!) on January 10th.
Phil Whitbeck and Joan Brandmahl, CoWardens

ADULT FORMATION

Sunday morning at 9:15 am – Join the discussions on religion, world events and the language of God. The group listens to NPR recording of “Speaking of Faith” interviews with authors, clergy and political and religious leaders, and then discusses the ideas presented. The group also is reading a chapter or two of a book, *The Language of God* - Reconciling God and Science. Genome mapper, Dr. Francis Collins is also an evangelical Christian. His new book says that's not a contradiction. Pick up copies of four chapters of his book and join the discussion on atheism, agnosticism, creationism and intelligent design.

Tuesday evenings from 7- 9 pm – new unit of Bible Study: the Book of Job began on January 16. The program is based on a 8-session curriculum published by Kerygma, “Job and The Life of Faith”, which costs \$20 per person. Please email Carol at revflett@yahoo.com, if you are still interested in attending so she can order additional books. No previous Bible Study experience expected or required. Drop in and see if you like it. Bring a friend. Members of St. John's Church are especially invited.

BEYOND THE DAILY GRIND

***FEBRUARY 13: SAVE THE DATE!! TELL YOUR FRIENDS about
“Beyond the Daily Grind: Talking About Issues that Matter”!***

On Tuesday, February 13 from 7-9pm St. Paul's is opening its doors to the larger community continuing the exciting series of grant-funded evenings with Rodney Petersen, Executive Director of the Boston Theological Institute (BTI), leading a casual conversation entitled “**The Healing Power of Forgiveness.**”

Rodney will discuss the healing benefits, both physical and spiritual, of practicing forgiveness and letting go of regrets and anger, followed by a question and answer session.

The Episcopal Parish of St Paul is at 1135 Walnut Street in Newton Highlands. Contact Karin Riley at 617-916-9241 to **reserve your seat** and if you have any questions about this evening.

***** A RECAP OF ST. PAUL'S PREVIOUS FORUM: Beyond the Daily Grind: “How Much is Enough? Meeting the Challenges of a Must Have Society.” *****

On Tuesday, November 14, twenty-six members of the greater community gathered to hear Susan Marx of Families First talk about consumerism and how it can interfere with families.

Raising children in a materialistic society is a challenge facing all parents today, regardless of economic standing or cultural background. Children are besieged with messages from the popular culture that happiness comes from having the “right things”. The session was meant to help parents clarify and express their values about material possessions. It also offered specific strategies for determining how much is enough, setting appropriate limits on spending, and communicating with children about materialism and media influence.

Families still play the most critical role in teaching children about values. While it is impossible not to be influenced by marketing and media messages parents can set the tone for how their family will participate in this materialism. This session explored the ways in which parents' thoughts about materialism affect their children, provided an opportunity for parents to clarify their own values, and provided suggestions of how to convey these values to children.

The session also introduced strategies to help parents take an active role in combating the influences of our powerful society. Susan referenced Packaging Girlhood by Sharon Lamb and Lyn Mikel Brown, as a fantastic book to consult on how marketers and advertisers misguide today's innocent children.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Discussion Items and End of Year Grants

Salvation Army Dinner December 11th. Elliot & Keith brought members of the senior high youth group. They helped with serving and cleaning up. They also baked cakes for dessert. They did a great job and are interested in coming again.

Waltham Community Day Center Lunch December 14th. We served baked ham, rolls, salad, pickles and Phil's famous brownies. Lisa made lovely gift bags filled with goodies for each guest.

End of year grants:

- \$400 Camp in Mississippi.
- \$200 Cousen's Fund.
- \$100 Newton Wellesley Protestant Chaplaincy.
- \$300 Epiphany School.

Mary Lou purchased library books for Epiphany School. In addition, Mary Lou provided information about children's Wish Tree Christmas gifts. FYI, Wish Tree Gifts were delivered and received with much delight and appreciation.

Ginny bought phone cards for members of the armed services. She delivered the cards to Newton City Hall.
Next Meeting: February 7th at Ginny Fruhan's home at 7:30 pm.

CANDIDATES CORNER

*A short update from Mark McKone-Sweet to
The Parish of Saint Paul's, Newton-Highlands.*

Dear Friends,
I hope this letter finds you in good health and spirits.

I write you today enjoying life on the other side of ordination exams. It feels so good to have my smile back. The exams were just what I had anticipated: long, exhausting, and challenging. The questions covered the following: the theology of who is God—Divine or human? ; a comparison of two different Eucharistic Prayers; a discussion of the Crusades of the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries as they relate to today's wars; an ethical analysis of whether lying is ever okay, an explanation of how Psalms 58 & 59 can be prayers for Christians; a response to a cancer patient question "Do I have enough faith?". You get the idea. These exams covered a large spectrum of my studies and formation in the church. The "readers of the exams", some 120 lay and ordained volunteers from around the country, will be reading and evaluating the exams at a meeting in Baltimore at the end of January. The results should come my way at the end of February. Stay tuned.

As soon as I finished exams, my schedule quickly filled up with "life after exams" demands. I had my first three interviews for assistantships in the diocese. I met with the woman who will be designing my ordination stole (a gift from my mother). This was very fun and exciting. There is nothing quite like "trying on a stole" in

front of a mirror for the first time! Finally, I have begun preparing my final documents for the Bishop's office and the Standing Committee for my first ordination (transitional deacon). This includes a letter of endorsement from Carol and the vestry.

I will be going to El Salvador with the Bishop in June. In all my years at Equal Exchange, I never had the chance to visit this country so I am very excited to be traveling there. This is a training mission team, for future leaders of mission trips in this diocese. Needless to say, I enjoy reading about your continue work in Belize with Saint John's Church.

I will write to you again in Lent.

Faithfully yours,
Mark

Mark McKone-Sweet
Third Year, M.Div.
The Episcopal Divinity School
Candidate for Holy Orders
Diocese of Massachusetts

FAITH & THE ENVIRONMENT

“All winter long/behind every thunder/guess what we heard!/the song /of a bird,/a trumpeting bird.

All winter long/beneath every snowing/guess what we saw!--beneath every snowing/a thaw/and a growing,/a greening
and a growing.

Where did we run/beyond gate and guardsman?/ Guess, if you can!--all winter long/we ran/to the sun,/the dance of the
sun!”

NATIVE AMERICAN SONG

2006 IN THE USA: PROGRESS? SETBACKS? FOR GOD’S CREATION

FIRST THE GOOD NEWS:

- *Global warming has gone “mainstream.” Al Gore’s “An Inconvenient Truth” certainly helped. And California adopted the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB32): it became the first state to establish a mandatory, economy-wide cap on global warming pollution. As a result a number of Senators are proposing bills in Congress to create a mandatory nationwide cap on this source of pollution. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) has been “saved.”
- *The wildlife safety net of the Endangered Species Act remains intact. To the benefit of wolves, butterflies and sea turtles among others.
- *A critical amendment passed by the Senate will lead to modernization of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (the agency responsible for the failure of the levees in New Orleans). There will be greater oversight of this agency so it will operate in both a more environmentally and fiscally responsible manner.
- *National Monument status has been designated to the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands--the largest protected marine reserve in the world.
- *Congress passed legislation that prohibits deliberate dissemination of false scientific information and bans the use of political “litmus” tests for science advisory committee members at certain government agencies.
- *Millions of acres of America’s lands have been designated wilderness status.
- *The “Roadless Rule” has been reinstated which prohibits developing new roads in wilderness areas.
- *The parent company of Victoria’s Secret recently announced it will support the protection of endangered forests. They will not use paper from endangered Boreal forests; they will increase recycled in all catalogs; they will move toward Forest Stewardship Council-certified fiber for non-recycled content; and they will support the Boreal Forest Conservation Framework.
- **What is the “Boreal Forest”? Located in Canada it is one of the world’s three largest intact forests. It is a major source of North America’s freshwater; it is also home to wolves, grizzlies, woodland caribou, songbirds, and waterfowl. The Forest’s capacity to store carbon ranks it as one of the planet’s top lines of defense against global warming. Yet two acres of this Forest is being logged per minute, mostly through clear cutting--for disposables such as toilet paper and paper towels. Victoria’s Secret’s decision hopefully may inspire other companies to support sustainable paper purchasing.
- *\$170 million dollars in subsidies to giant oil companies for financing their search for oil were eliminated.
- *The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has updated their fuel economy testing procedures which were decades out of date.
- *Fourteen federal agencies must now comply with a new law that requires fleet purchases of new cars to be approximately 75 percent alternative fuel vehicles.

NOW THE BAD NEWS:

- *In a “last hurrah” in December Congress passed legislation that would open up for drilling 8.3 million acres in the Gulf of Mexico. The area is home to more than 20 species of whales and dolphins, five species of sea turtles, dozens of fish species, and hundreds of species of birds. The proposed drilling would mean more air pollution, noise disruptions, and toxic emissions from drilling platforms along with increased tanker traffic (and the potential risk of spills). (A rep from the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) has stated it “will do something.”) .Both polar and grizzly bears face real threats and for the first creatures, maybe extinction. For these, listing under the Endangered Species Act is being sought; for the grizzlies an attempt to “delist” is being fought.

*North Atlantic right whales may also face extinction, because of ongoing ship strikes.
 *More than 9.5 million acres--a record--were consumed by wildfires in the country this past year.
 *And in Massachusetts the Environmental League of Massachusetts gave a rating of "poor" to thirteen of twenty areas it evaluated. (Though it gave a "good" rating to three areas.) The population of migrating birds (often a barometer of a region's health), for example, has dropped 50 percent in the last thirty-five years. (The Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, Plymouth, "The Boston Globe," October 17, 2006.)

So--more progress toward saving God's Creation than setbacks. Thanks to the "proactivity" of thousands of people. Activism works!

NEWS NOTES

OLD CELL PHONES AND EYEGLASSES are requested by The Order of the Eastern Star. Cell phone are for use by battered women, eyeglasses are for the Lion's Club. Your donations may be given to Elaine Kell.

DATES TO REMEMBER

JANUARY HAPPENINGS!

January 28 Sunday	Worship Meeting	12:00 – 1:00
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FEBRUARY HAPPENINGS!

February 7 Wednesday	Next Outreach Committee Meeting Ginny Fruhan's house	7:30 pm
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HAPPY BIRTHDAY! HAPPY BIRTHDAY! HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

January 3	Aaron Montgomery
January 8	Kim Koger
January 10	Emily Walsh
January 12	Burke Lanzillo, Tim Dunn
January 26	Eleanor Lynch
February 5	Roger Swain
February 6	David Stafford
February 7	Andrew Jones
February 10	Kate McKone-Sweet
February 11	Caroline Pandorf
February 12	Mildred Feist
February 14	Bill Kemeza
February 17	Samantha Polon
February 19	William Ward, Leland Grigoli
February 21	Eliza Blay, Jennifer Walsh, Matthew Vertescher
February 26	Betty Murray

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY! HAPPY ANNIVERSARY! HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

January 2	Chris and Liza Meyer	
February 9	David and Charlotte Stafford	