
◆ News and Views from St. Paul's ◆

Volume 13, Issue 9

September, 2010

Upcoming Events

- September 4: 5:00 PM, Service at St. Matthew's, Stevensville
September 5: 9 AM, 15 Pentecost
11 AM, Special Eucharist at St. Mark's, New Milford
Picnic to Follow
September 8: 12:10 PM, Eucharist at St. Paul's, Bag lunch to follow
September 11: 9:30 AM, DOK
9 AM—NOON, Can Drive, St. Paul's
September 12: 9 AM, 16 Pentecost
Worship at St. Paul's
Sermon by Charlie Barebo, Diocesan Development Officer
Forward Life Planning presentation following the service
5 PM, Vesper Service, Light Supper to Follow
September 13-20: Father Paul on Vacation
September 14: 2 PM, Stewardship Committee
September 15: 12:10 PM, Eucharist at St. Paul's, Bag lunch to follow
September 19: 9 AM, 17 Pentecost
Worship at St. Paul's
September 22: 12:10 PM, Eucharist at St. Paul's, Bag lunch to follow
5:30 PM, Vestry
September 25: 8:30 AM, Red Cross CPR Training at St. Paul's
September 26: Inspiration Sunday
9 AM, 18 Pentecost,
Worship at St. Paul's
Open House at the Rector, after the 9 AM service
September 28: 10:00 AM, DOK
6:30 PM, Finance Committee
September 29: 12:10 PM, Eucharist at St. Paul's, Bag lunch to follow

Last Service of the Summer at St. Matthews

September 4th at 5:00 p.m.

Stevensville is on
Rt. 706 West of Montrose

For Labor Day

Almighty God, you have so linked our lives one with another that all we do affects, for good or ill, all other lives: So guide us in the work we do, that we may do it not for self alone, but for the common good; and, as we seek a proper return for our own labor, make us mindful of the rightful aspirations of other workers, and arouse our concern for those who are out of work; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Daughters of the King Picnic at Rita's House

We all met at Rita's for the Daughters of the King picnic. We had bible study. We studied Joseph the father of Jesus. We had a lovely lunch. *Submitted by Heather Walker*

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In the late 1970's my family and I entered the Episcopal Church. I had begun to worship at St. Luke's in Scranton. The Rector, a friend of this parish, Everett Francis made a pastoral visit to explain the process, and note our information regarding Baptismal information and Confirmation information, etc. Towards the end of the visit Father Francis explained how the finances of the parish worked and the need to make a pledge commitment. He explained tithing to us and asked us to think about what we, a young family with a challenged daughter, might be able to commit to. I was close to thirty years of age at that point in time. My former Roman Catholic parish had envelopes which said on the outside, "We are a tithing parish". Yet, up until this point in my life, no one had ever explained what was meant by the word *tithing*. No wonder my former parish had to rely on Bingo Night, a 50/50 Club and a Block Party to provide the needed income to make their expenses!

No one had ever spoken to me about recognizing the abundant blessings most of us share in, just by living in the United States. Everett pointed out that all too often we work out of a theology of scarcity rather than abundance. He pointed out as well that all we have, even when we think it is all of our own making, is actually from God. God has blessed us with the intelligence, abilities, and opportunities to achieve. From a biblical perspective the only thing God asks of us is to use 10% of what we earn to support the furtherment of God's Kingdom here on earth through our community of faith. The Hebrew Scriptures is very clear on this point. What we decide to support outside of our community of faith is our choice after supporting our family of faith! By the way, tithing of my time and talent I had already become a discipline in my life at this point in time.

Imagine my surprise upon hearing this! Here I was close to thirty years of age, a lay leader of my former parish and no one had ever approached this subject with me! My reaction was to set for myself a three year goal of reaching tithing from that point on. It wasn't easy and in the midst of it all I gave up my position at Marywood to attend seminary in Rochester, New York where I knew absolutely no one. I look back on that time in my life and wonder, "How on God's earth did we ever manage to do that?". The answer is to be found in learning to trust in God's promises and realize that God will not abandon us if we trust and respond to what it is that God's asks of us.

Over the course of time I have come to believe that the opportunity to pledge and tithe is a gift in and of itself. It is a discipline that is vital to my own spiritual journey and growth. I don't make this commitment because I have to, or because the Scriptures tell me to, or even because the church asks this of me. I make this commitment because it is important for me in my relationship with God.

I am aware that there are parishes blessed with endowment funds even much greater than our own here at St. Paul's. Those funds are both a blessing and a problem. All too often parishioners will respond to pledge campaigns with something similar to this, "Oh, they have an endowment and/or DIT account. They don't need my money." In some rare cases that may be true, but in most cases you can only use a very small portion of the endowment to support the general budget of a parish. Hence, the members pledge support is basic to the survival of the parish.

The bottom line is whether we are deciding to sign a pledge card, and/or making a commitment to work towards tithing, the most important aspect of this decision is what it does for our own spiritual growth!

The leadership of St. Paul's has made the decision to invest in a well developed stewardship program this year that has a very successful track history. Please take the time to carefully read over the materials you will be receiving shortly. Pray about what your response will be, trust in God's steadfast love for us, and last but not least please **sign** and return your pledge card! I pray that you will allow the Holy Spirit to guide you in the decision you make. Amen!

Faithfully, Father Paul

In Celebration of Labor Day and the close of the summer Season

To mark the closing of the summer season there will be two picnics. The first will be at St. Matthew's in Stevensville following the final service of the summer on Saturday, September 4.

On Sunday, September 5 all of the members of the three Episcopal parishes in upper Susquehanna County are invited to join together for a special Eucharist and pot luck picnic lunch at St. Mark's in New Milford. The service will be held at 11:00 A.M. on the lawn at St. Mark's (weather permitting). A community potluck picnic will follow. Please bring a dish to pass and your lawn chairs for a wonderful day with your Episcopal sisters and brothers from here in Susquehanna County! Note: Eucharist will be still be offered at St. Paul's at 9 A.M. that morning for those that wish it.

Forward Life Planning

Don't forget that Charlie Barebo, Development Officer for the Diocese of Bethlehem, will be joining us on September 12th to deliver the sermon and to meet with us during coffee hour to discuss the challenges of planning our future, the future of our family, and the future of our church. This informative session deals with estate planning, writing our wills, preparing a living will and a health care proxy, making those difficult decisions that fall upon our loved ones when we procrastinate, and methods to remember the church in your will, along with possible reduction in estate taxes. These are all important issues that lead to peace of mind when addressed. The Episcopal Church has developed an informative program that provides clear guidance in matters that often baffle us. As I said in last month's newsletter, Dick and I have already attended this session and found it to be extremely informative and we encourage you to attend this gathering. You won't be disappointed.
Submitted by Sandy Schwab

Aluminum Can Drive

Aluminum cans, and deposit only plastic or glass bottles will be collected at our drop off site at the Chestnut St., Parish Hall entrance on Saturday, September 11 from 9:00 AM to Noon. Please help us in this effort by saving your rinsed out cans and bottles for St. Paul's. Any questions please feel free to call Dick Schwab at 967-2962 or Jerry Sock at 833-4586.

Second Sunday Vesper Service

The September vesper service will be held on Sunday, September 12, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Church Street, Montrose, PA. On this day, the service marks its second anniversary with special greetings from Father Charles Cesaretti; door greeters are Sandy and Richard Schwab, Duane Hinds is the reader and Sarah Bertsch is organist. A men's chorus will provide special music, directed by David Andre. A salad buffet will be served in the Parish House. All are welcome.

Red Cross CPR Training

St. Paul's will host CPR Training by the American Red Cross on Saturday, September 25th in the Parish House, commencing at 8:30 a.m. The 8 hour course will cover training for administration of adult, child and infant CPR, First Aid training, and training in the use of an AED. The sole cost for participation is the standard Red Cross fee of \$45 per person. The training will be available to members of St. Paul's, as well as the community. To reserve your spot please contact the Parish Office at 570-278-2954 to enroll and submit your payment. Checks should be made out to the American Red Cross. Class size is limited to insure adequate attention to all trainees and registration and payment must be received no later than September 16th.

Open House at the Rectory

Father Paul and his family invite you to an Open House at the New Rectory at 15 Bowen Street on September 26 following the Sunday Service. Pray for good weather and consider bringing your law chairs with you!

Please let the Parish Office know by Wednesday, September 22 if you intend to attend so that sufficient food can be prepared.

Crafters Corner Store To Open In October

Crafters Corner Store will once again be returning to St. Paul's; however, this year it will be on a new day. Our store will now be open on the first SATURDAY of October, November, and December. Watch for more details in the coming weeks. *Sandy/Esther/Rita*

Gratitude Sunday

Members of St. Paul's sponsored Cub Scout Pack #92 will plant a red oak tree in the Memorial Garden after the 9:00AM Sunday service on October 3rd. The tree is being donated to commemorate the 100th anniversary year of Scouting and to exhibit their gratitude for St. Paul's continuing sponsorship of the Scout Pack for more than 60 years. All members of the congregation are invited to join in the planting ceremony and then proceed to the parish hall for coffee hour refreshments.

Volunteers Needed

As part of ongoing cost saving measures, St. Paul's Vestry is looking for volunteers to mow the lawn around the church and in the Memorial Garden during September, October and November. It is anticipated that the lawns will need mowing weekly through this period. Initially you will have to bring your own equipment, but we have an offer of the donation of a riding mower.

A sign up sheet will be in the Parish Hall beginning on Sunday, or you can call the church office weekdays between 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM.

Autumn Returns to Susquehanna County: Under the Light of the Harvest Moon

Dinner and Live Jazz

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16 AT ST. PAUL'S
TICKETS \$25**

*Cream of Butternut Squash Soup
With savory Polenta croutons*

*Salad of pears, walnuts and Gorgonzola cheese
Breast of Chicken stuffed with Prosciutto and
fresh sage over a bed of wild rice*

or

*Manicotti stuffed with sage-scented goat cheese
Oven-roasted Autumn Vegetables
Bread Pudding with Apples and Raisins and a
warm Apple Cider Sauce*

Lawn Mower Needed

As a cost saving measure, St. Paul's Vestry has voted to cancel lawn care services for the remainder of the year at both the rectory and the church. In order to mow the rectory lawn, we are looking for the donation of a serviceable used (or new) walk behind lawn (21- 23) inch cut mower in good condition for Father Paul to use. If anyone has a spare mower that fits the bill and is willing to donate it to the church, please contact John Finlon at (570) 965-2722.

How is it?

When a committee or a church service or action group makes a general announcement for volunteers, hardly anyone will step forward and sign up. But when we ask them personally, we have better luck in recruiting help? *Submitted by Jerry Sock*

SAVE THE DATE!
 First Night at St. Paul's
 Friday, December 31
 Full Buffet Dinner and Entertainment for the
 Whole Family!
 Tickets \$25

Arts And Crafts Festival A Major Success

St. Paul's Arts and Crafts Festival was bigger and better than ever this year. If you stopped by you saw the beautiful raffle baskets that drew the attention of all attendees due to their size and the generous donations from the members of this parish. The raffle raised \$787 for the Library Operating Budget. Two members of the parish were among the lucky winners for the raffle drawing. Ben Zalewski won the "Pet" basket and Barb Shingler walked away with the "Cocktails at Five" prize. The other three winners were equally excited when they learned of their good luck and quickly arrived at St. Paul's to collect their prize. In addition to helping the library, our bake sale was a huge success – so much so that the few items that were left were being quickly purchased by crafters as they departed. Father Randy's organ recitals and tours of the church, which included the beautiful display of historic photographs on loan from the County's Historical Society, were all very popular with visitors and members of the parish. The bake sale, tours and crafters fees raised a total of \$838 for St. Paul's Building Fund. Best of all, the entire event was coordinated closely with the Library to insure that we augmented the Blueberry Festival activities and we all enjoyed a great day of fellowship and sense of community. Thanks to all who contributed to the success of this event. *Submitted by Sandy Schwab*

Newsletter Goes Electronic For All

Like many publications, the cost of producing a monthly newsletter is becoming prohibitive. Postage and copying costs continue to rise and we must now fully implement electronic email of the newsletter. Effective with the October newsletter we will be going electronic. In recognition that some wish to have a hard copy in hand, we will place copies on the table at the rear of the church. Only those active members who do not have email will receive a copy of the newsletter via mail; however, we do not want to eliminate anyone that is interested in keeping up-to-date on what is happening at St. Paul's whether you are an inactive member or an interested friend. Therefore, we recommend that you complete the form below and submit it to St. Paul's during September in order to continue receiving our newsletter. If you already receive the newsletter via email, it is unnecessary for you to fill out the form. We are confident everyone understands the need to cut expenses and our move to this cost effective means of communicating with all of you.

Please complete this form and return it to St. Paul's if you are interested in continuing to receive our monthly newsletter (please print clearly):

Yes, I wish to receive St. Paul's newsletter. Please email it to me at:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Yes, I wish to continue receiving St. Paul's newsletter but do not have email

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please return this form to St. Paul's at 276 Church Street, Montrose PA 18801 or email the information to stpaulsmontrose@epix.net

Your Vestry At Work

The following is a summary of the August 19th meeting of St. Paul's Vestry:

Implemented the following emergency steps to deal with the serious budgetary shortfall, effective immediately:

- ▶ Notify Rodney Stone that we must discontinue his lawn cutting service at the church and the rectory
- ▶ Seek volunteers to take turns cutting the grass at the church
- ▶ Seek donation (or purchase) of a hand mower for Father Paul to use at the rectory
- ▶ Notify VanCott that we must discontinue the service for fertilizing/feeding the church lawn
- ▶ Seek support from the parish in cleaning up issues they notice throughout the parish versus leaving it for the cleaning crew whose hours have been cut
- ▶ Exercise prudence with mileage; utilize local vendors when possible to cut mileage costs; eliminate unnecessary travel; organize/schedule trips to eliminate unnecessary repetition when possible
- ▶ Carefully budget costs for new activities to insure a means of covering expenses prior to incurring costs
- ▶ Eliminate the lengthy bulletins for church services and go back to using the prayer book and hymnal
- ▶ Reduce newsletter copying and mailing costs by immediately implementing emailing of newsletters to all who have a computer, without exception. Printed copies will be available at the back of the church for those who wish to pick one up. Via notification in the September newsletter implement a process for insuring that non-members who wish to continue receiving the newsletter contact us
- ▶ Approved a line of credit through the end of the year from Friends of St. Paul's in an amount not to exceed \$15,000, in addition to the \$5,000 that is still owed, with a maximum of \$5,000 being taken at a time on an as needed basis
- ▶ Authorized payment to Martha Yanovich for her assistance at St. Matthew's in an amount \$50 above last year's payment, not to exceed \$500
- ▶ Accepted with gratitude the Boy Scouts offer to plant a tree in our Memorial Garden to commemorate the 100th anniversary of scouting and 50 years of meetings hosted by St. Paul's. Dick Schwab will work with the scouts to coordinate this event and assist with the tree planting
- ▶ Noted Father Paul's vacation which will commence following completion of services on September 12th through September 19th
- ▶ Rescheduled the September Vestry meeting to September 22nd

Please refer to the bulletin board in the Guild room for the complete meeting minutes as well as financial statements.

Respectfully submitted by Sandy Schwab, Clerk to Vestry

Sharing

Within the month you will be asked to assess what has been provided for you by the Lord. During the annual pledge drive we all are asked to reflect on what we have been given and how much of that we can give to show our thanks and appreciation to the Lord.

Stewardship of your church is a multi-faceted gem. In the current day stewardship has been boiled down to the simplistic phrase; "Time, Talent and Treasure". In reality stewardship goes much deeper than that in that it is the reflection of your Christian beliefs and how those beliefs manifest themselves in your everyday living. How do you care for your fellow parish members and the future of St. Paul's? How are you willing to share of God's bounty?

Before you skip to the next article, think seriously about the meaning of the words that are repeated during each Sunday service at the offertory; "**All things** come of thee O Lord and **Of thine own** have we given thee".

What does this weekly recital mean to **YOU**? Really! Is it just a rote repetition that is part of the service, or have you thought about the true meaning of the words you repeat? Give this some serious thought prior to completing and returning your annual pledge card this year.

Give thanks for the good things that God provides for you during each day. *Respectfully submitted,*
Richard Schwab

For Vocation in Daily Work

Almighty God our heavenly Father, you declare your glory and show forth your handiwork in the heavens and in the earth: Deliver us in our various occupations from the service of self alone, that we may do the work you give us to do in truth and beauty and for the common good; for the sake of him who came among us as one who serves, your Son Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Who are We?

Many years ago, when I belonged to the United Church of Christ, I preached a sermon on Laity Sunday. I can't remember all of the sermon, but I know what it was about because the thrust of the sermon was contained in the last sentence: "Ladies and gentlemen, we are the church!"

As I was thinking about Stewardship, this sentence came into my head, and I wondered what it had to do with Stewardship. I thought about it for a while and decided that it has **everything** to do with it.

Here in Montrose, at St. Paul's we had a sign on the front of the building that said, "Come Grow With Us." The sign referred to the size of our souls as well as the size of our congregation. Either way, it wasn't talking about the size of a building which we call a "church." When we speak about "our church" we are referring to the people we commune with each Sunday. We, the people, the congregation = St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Montrose.

Therefore, if we are the church, it is ourselves we are taking care of when we give to the church. Our weekly pledges pay for our spiritual food and drink, or at least they should. They should also clothe us. We should be able to pay our own way without depending on others for our sustenance.

When we find we need to put a roof on our house or paint the home we live in, we need to use some of our savings. This is also true of us as the church. We are responsible for our home, be it spiritual or physical. We should take care of ourselves.

When someone in our family needs help, we need to dig in and send them aid. We don't wring our hands and cry, "Oh, we couldn't possibly afford that!" We just lend a hand. How different should that be in our church family? Wouldn't we be ashamed to refuse to help our personal friends or families?

The church is our family. These are the things our church must do. Or, more precisely, these are the things **WE** must do.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are the church!
submitted by Jane Chandler

Historic St. Matthew's

What does the word "historic" mean? As a Midwesterner, I was both amazed and amused when I first moved east to find that people in this part of the country liked to describe nearly every location and structure as "historic." In the Midwest we didn't have many places that deserved the title "historic," and I had trouble believing that every place out here needed to be described by this same term.

So what does "historic" mean when used to describe a place?

In my parlance, to be considered historic, a place must be one of two things (or both). It must either be a place where something fairly momentous took place, or it must be a place that had been frequented for some reason by a person or persons of some historical note.

Now to the purpose of this little treatise.

We have in our care a building of very momentous historical significance. I speak of St. Matthew's Church in nearby Stevensville. This church is linked solidly to the very history of our denomination in the United States. How is this so?

St. Matthew's Church was consecrated by none other than Bishop William White. Bishop White was not only the first Episcopal Bishop of Pennsylvania, he was, more importantly, the second Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States. And there's more! Bishop White had also served as the chaplain to the Continental Congress and had been the first Chaplain to the United States Senate. This was the man who had stood in the building in Stevensville to consecrate it in 1824. Impressed with the history so far? I am!

As it stands today, this church is a true museum piece! The interior is virtually unchanged from its late nineteenth century appearance. There is no electricity or plumbing in the building, and the only lighting is by kerosene lamps converted from whale oil in the late 1800's. A coal stove and an ancient pump organ grace the interior. The bench pews are uncomfortable and serve to remind one of the ardor which our ancestors brought to their worship of God.

St. Matthew's has fallen on hard days! The building is used only a few times each summer and once around Christmas. The foundation is weak, and the structure cries out for maintenance and painting. If allowed to go unattended to, St Matthew's, in spite of its rich past, has no future! So what is to be done? What can be done?

As with everything, the final answer lies with money. Money from where? From whom? From us -- you and me? From St. Paul's? From the Diocese? Where does the responsibility for the salvation of St. Matthew's lie? St. Paul's was entrusted with the immediate responsibility for the day-to-day upkeep of the place some decades ago. It is also a fact that it is the oldest active church in the Diocese. Is history enough reason to marshal resources to preserve a relic? If so, upon whom does the responsibility fall? My information is that thus far, the Diocese has indicated no interest in saving this part of our history.

Do we therefore bid farewell to such an important part of our legacy? *Sic transit Gloria*, St. Matthew's.

submitted by Ron Chandler

*Paul Marshall and Frances Lausch
gratefully acknowledge your prayers and
support at the death of their mother Frances.
The unbearable is made tolerable by community
and your kindness is a great gift.
May she rest in peace and may light perpetually
shine upon her.*

Psalms, Mitre-gate and Train Wrecks

Finished Bishop Paul's book about the first Episcopal Bishop in the U.S. ... who was ordained even before we beat General Cornwallis at Yorktown. Among the many things Bishop Seabury did, was write the following quote from a letter in the appendices. "*Persons at a distance are not always masters of the precise reasons and circumstances which have occasioned particular modes of acting.*" Samuel Seabury to the elder William Smith New London, Aug. 15th, 1785. Again, he said, "*I have written freely as becomes an honest man; and in a case which I think calls for freedom of sentiment and expression.*" *ibid.* The appendices are 147 pages long. (I've read books that weren't that long.) There is much to be admired in Seabury. I was reminded of our Presiding Bishop and the fact that she wasn't permitted to wear the mitre at an Anglican Church where she gave the sermon with the Archbishop of Canterbury present (mitre-gate). Remember, closer to home, when (in the early 1800's) the founder of St. Paul's, Montrose had a verbal battle with one of the local clergy via letters. (There must be something toxic in the Episcopal baptismal water that makes Episcopalians cantankerous.)

Back to the psalms ... No "Burning Bush", yet. The Holy Spirit has a lot of work to do getting through to me. I've been thinking (mistake). What would the psalm be for Kajo Keji? What about psalm 37? There are two parts in the BCP. The last 2 of the 42 lines give you a flavor of the other ones, "*But the deliverance of the righteous comes from the Lord: he is their stronghold in time of trouble. The Lord will help them and rescue them; he will rescue them from the wicked and deliver them, because they seek refuge in him.*" (Before you fuss at me for not capitalizing "he" and "him", check the BCP and see if they are capitalized.)

I guess that psalm 37 is one that recognizes current troubles and yet projects hope. From everything I've read about Southern Sudan they have current troubles and they need hope. Maybe that's why we have a "New Hope" campaign ... to help give them hope.

I've been reading a book by Ann Weems in 1982 entitled, "Psalms of Lament." She has written fifty psalms that express her grief about the murder of her 21 year old son on his 21st birthday. As a person who has lost a daughter to a similar senseless murder 23 years ago, I can identify with the pain. For those of you unfamiliar with this pain, let me tell you that the best I can do is to read only one per day of those 50 psalms that she wrote. She was an author of some repute before the tragic event. (To show you how reputable she is, I hadn't heard of her before I read her book. There are lots of great authors I haven't heard of.) For those of you who empathize with authors, it is not a quick read. It will scar your heart.

In a similar fashion, I feel like I'm on a mountain looking at the train tracks in the valley below. There is but one track. There are two trains headed toward one another. All things being equal, there is going to be a train wreck. I can't get down to the valley. I can't even call 911. I guess the best I can do is pray that "all things aren't equal." And then there is the "train wreck" of the Southern Sudan referendum of January 2011. I'm praying that "all things aren't equal."

Bye.

*I am feeling the psalms. (I'm working on loving the psalms.)
I pray daily for Diocese of Kajo Keji, the parish of Pomoju
and the Diocese of Bethlehem, and the parish of St. Paul*

Submitted by Al Leigh, BoSA(Brotherhood of St. Andrew) = f(study, prayer, service)

"Bringing men and boys to Christ."

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Summer is beginning to show signs of coming to an end here in upper Susquehanna County, and my thoughts have begun to turn to autumn. I grew up in rural Iowa and my thoughts cannot help but turn to looking ahead to harvest of God's great bounty to us and our need to give thanks to the One from whom everything begins and ends in.

My daily routine of morning and evening prayer has caused several of my favorite passages of scripture to be read. Several weeks ago the Epistle lesson came from Paul's letter to the church at Rome and the Gospel was the story of the feeding of the five thousand from Matthew's Gospel. Those readings left me with four thoughts, possibly the four things I really know to be true, and I thought it might be well to share them with you. They're really profound, but they don't require a theology degree to understand them. I think that they easily sum up much of what the Christian scriptures say to us, and point to our responsibility to share them with those who have yet to hear them.

First of all is my responsibility to be a good steward of everything that God has gifted me with. That's where the first of those four thoughts begins.

1. Everything We Have Begins And Ends In God.

The Psalmist writes in the twenty-fourth Psalm "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers." God has created everything and to God does everything ultimately belong.

In Genesis we are commissioned to be the caretakers of God's creation, and later we are all called to be thankful for everything that God has given to us and to return the first ten-percent of all of our gifts back to God. We are called to live in God's abundance and to return from that abundance and not from what is left over.

The word "steward" is an old one in the English language, dating from at least the twelfth century.

Broadly translated it means "keeper of the sty," or the "keeper of the swine," remembering that livestock were at the heart of an agrarian society, and the welfare of the landholder's livestock could mean life and death for a community. Good stewardship of God's creation requires of us to be careful caretakers of God's creation. Financial stewardship is based on the belief that God is the true and ultimate owner of each person's possessions, and that one is accountable to God for the acceptable care and use of those possessions.

Nothing that we have really belongs to us. The story is told of two people speaking at the funeral of Aristotle Onassis, probably one of the world's wealthiest people. The first said "I wonder how much he left." The response was "Everything."

During my time at Bexley Hall I came to be good friends with a student from the Black Church Tradition and, whenever he preached, there was a common thread that ran through his sermons. It developed into a "call and response" pattern that we all knew. Whenever Alan said "God is good," it was our job to respond with "All the time!" This is the second of the "Good news" that came to me from those lessons:

2. God Is Good— All The Time.

Sometimes we can get caught up in feeling sorry for ourselves and feel that God is either away on vacation or just not listening to our complaints. But the reality is that it is God's good nature to be good "all of the time." Not whenever God feels like it, not when it's convenient for God, but all the time. And the world outside our doors, broken and wounded and hurting as it is, needs to hear that simple Gospel, that "God is good, all the time."

3. God Gives Us Everything We Need.

In the story of the feeding of the five thousand Jesus was confronted by a large multitude of people, at least five thousand men not counting women and children, who had followed Jesus "to a deserted place." When evening came he told the disciples to feed the people and they balked at the task.

Cont. on page 11....

Cont. from page 10

Now I don't know about you, but I can tell you that my mother would never have gone anywhere with my sister and I as children without food in her purse.

That leads me to believe that a group of probably scores of thousands of people could not have been there without some food of their own. When some began to give to Jesus what they had God was able to give the people not just what they needed to eat but there were baskets of leftovers.

God is good all of the time and gives to us all that we need. As Americans, however, we are want to confuse what we need with what we want, and the two are rarely the same. And what would happen if we all opened the picnic hampers of our lives and offered back to God what God gave to us to start with?

As a parish the good news is that probably everything we really need to do ministry with is already among us. The problem is that we are not always quick to share it. And so the ultimate reality is that God can't leave us with baskets left over until we turn over what we have to God and let God do what God does best.

Lastly, from Paul's letter to the church at Rome comes the best piece of "Good news" for the world:

4. Nothing Can Separate Us From The Love Of God.

Paul says that nothing in heaven or on earth is able to separate us from the love of God that we encounter through Jesus Christ. That world standing right outside of our doors needs to hear this simple truth—NOTHING! Absolutely nothing can ever separate us from the enduring, everlasting love of God. No doctrine or dogma made by human will is able to separate any one of us who are children of God from the love of God.

Find someone this week and share that good news with them. You may just change their lives!

Thanks be to God! Amen!
Faithfully, Randy Webster

Financial Update

St. Paul's currently is going through tight times from a cash flow perspective. Contributions are below and expenses are running above initial projections.

Vestry reduced expenses by \$33,000 in the initial 2010 budget over 2009, but this still left a \$30,000 shortfall caused by the \$63,000+ reduction in income from the diocesan investment trust. Your Vestry has taken several significant steps to reduce costs and rebalance the budget for the year; however, these steps still will not correct the current projected shortfall of \$20,000 by the end of the year. We are asking for everyone's support through the remainder of 2010 to help pay the bills.

First; help us reduce our costs (and shortfall). Take a little time to turn out lights when you leave rooms. Turn the thermostat down when you are done with meetings and don't turn it up quite as much in the first instance. Clean up after yourself when you use the church, parish hall or kitchen. Help by emptying trash. Use fewer disposable cups and plates. Refrain from using excessive amounts of water. Immediately report problems with running toilets or other leaks to the junior warden or another member of the property committee - we pay for water and sewer at the church. Close the doors when coming or going. Volunteer to offset the cost of contracted services. In general, do all the things at St. Paul's that you would do at home to economize and save on expenses. Remember, St. Paul's is "family".

Second; we are low on donations and high on bills at this point in the year. Any increase in contributions to the general operating budget will help offset the deficiency we currently have, and will be most greatly appreciated.

The financial figures for July can be found in the treasurer's report posted on the board in the Guild Room, attached to the Vestry minutes. Please take the time to read them.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Schwab, treasurer

September, 2010 Lay Ministry Schedule

Altar Guild

Barb Buffington, Margie Baker and
Betty Smith

Camera and Closing

Ron Chandler

Coffee Hour

5: Dan and Lynne Graham and
Karen Wolfson
12: Rachel and Lucas Bartron
19: Volunteer Needed
26: Esther Welden and Heather Walker

Counters

5: Jane Chandler and Maggie Sock
12: Joan Hamilton and Karen Wolfson
19: Jerry Sock and Richard Schwab
26: Bernie Zalewski and Carol Marker

Eucharistic Minister

5: Jane Chandler and Margaret Baker
12: Mary Jane Syle and Brenda Syle
19: Bernie Zalewski and Alma Shingler
26: Jenny Bowen and Jerry Sock

Greeters

5: Margaret Burgh
12: Hap Syle
19: Nancy Finlon
26: Joan Hamilton

St. Paul's Lector

5: Brenda Syle
12: Mary Jane Syle
19: Bernie Zalewski
26: Mary Zalewski

St. Paul's Usher

5: Mike and Delaney Shingler
12: John Finlon and Lucas Bartron
19: Maggie and Jerry Sock
26: Richard Schwab and Max Bartron

St. Matthew's Lector

4: Mary Jane Syle

St. Matthew's Usher

4: Al Leigh

St. Paul's Eucharistic Home Visitors

1st and 3rd Weekend:

Mary Jane Syle and Bernie Zalewski

2nd and 4th Weekend:

Jane Chandler and Jerry Sock