



St. Paul's Episcopal Church

THE GOOD NEWS

April 2020

The mission of St. Paul's is to be the Body of Christ and instruments of his love and grace committed to serve and nurture this church and community.

A Very Long Lent

from the Rector

There is probably no doubt in *anyone's* mind by now that we are living through a *very* unusual Lent this year, an extraordinarily challenging wilderness journey.

The evolution of my own understanding of the crisis situation in which we find ourselves is easy to see just looking at my calendar. By the time we began Lent at the end of February, we all knew the novel word coronavirus. But on the First Sunday in Lent, March 1, for me it was still something that was a problem for the other side of the world—you know, like the last several rounds of such viral outbreaks.

By the next Sunday, we had all been made much more aware of the on-going spread of Coronavirus-19 as it made its way into Europe and into a steady drum beat on the evening news and social media, so much so that my own sermon that morning cautioned against letting our focus be consumed by what I then still regarded as ill-focused alarmism.

I was attending the second in the Lenten Lunch series the following Wednesday when I heard that the Governor had suggested closing churches, and, with the rest of my colleagues present, I emphatically stated my opinion that governors have no business making such a demand, and that I would only do such a thing in obedience to my vows to my Bishop. By the end of the week, I sent out a message to all of you that we would treat this situation the same way we treat Sunday morning snow storms, though by Sunday morning, Den. Larry and I had made changes in how we greeted one another, how we interacted during the service, and how we administered communion, and I used that morning's sermon time to say so.

As I learned more and more over the next few days, trying to drink, as they say, from a fire-hose, I became convinced that the social distancing I had come to fear as much as the virus itself was the only thing that I could offer to stand between the spread of an unseen enemy and all of you, my beloved Family.

And so it was that on Thursday of the third week of Lent, I sent you a note outlining the changes I felt we needed to make to the way we are Church to keep us all safe and well. "I will offer our blessed "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving" on all our behalf," I said, "and you will stay home." The next day, Bishop Terry gave the same directive to the rest of the Diocese of Kentucky.

Since then, that has been the reality of our life at St. Paul's. Your Vestry and I have tried to find creative ways to sustain our worship and conduct the "business" of our Parish. And many of *you* have found ways of being Church that have nothing to do with the building we love so much.

Some are driven to do something, anything to feel a little less isolated, a little less powerless in the face of this unseen enemy. Some are moved by their own call to fulfill the work they feel they have been given to do in Christ's name. Some even seem to want nothing more than to be pastoral to their pastor, to take some load off *me*, and I love you for it. But all of them are motivated by love for our Parish and the Family we have knit together in all the moments of or years, as we pray and work and live together. I hope you will take the time to read the many stories in these pages about how that is happening every day.

As we move into what will, no doubt, be the most unusual Holy Week thus far in any of our lives, one that I pray will be *unique* in our lives, I hope we can resist the desire to "normalize" these distinctly *abnormal* times. As is certainly part of who we are, we will share our "Alleluias" on April 12, and we will find wonderful ways to share them again when this storm has passed. But in the in-between time, I hope that you will join me in looking at this time of isolation and self-denial as a continuation of our Lenten journey, a time to take stock of what is really important in our lives—as individuals, and as members of this Family that continues to give us life.

Peace and joy,

Upcoming Events

In this time of deliberate physical distancing, all services will be livestreamed to St. Paul's Facebook page"

<https://www.facebook.com/St.PaulsHenderson>

Sunday

8 a.m. — Holy Eucharist, Rite I

10 a.m. — Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Monday-Saturday

9 a.m. — The Act of Spiritual Communion

Holy Week

Monday-Thursday — 9 a.m. & Noon — The Act of Spiritual Communion

Maundy Thursday — 6 p.m. — Maundy Thursday Table Liturgy

Good Friday — 6 p.m. — Stations of the Cross

Holy Saturday — 8 p.m. — The Great Vigil

All other Parish activities are suspended until we have been given the go-ahead by the Bishop of Kentucky and governmental authority.

Around the Parish



Before social distancing kicked-in, Corey helped EYC make real beds for real kids in Henderson.



When we can't get together, youth get together anyway—like this Sunday evening service of Compline held on Zoom.



Some of the sidewalk hopefulness spread around town by St. Paul's Youth.

Holy Land Travels – Part 10

from the Deacon

It took a few minutes to get everyone out of the souvenir shop in Bethlehem and back on our coach to travel to our next holy site. Once everyone was counted, with no one missing, Ruben drove us to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem where Jesus was born.

When entering the Church of the Nativity, we had to stoop very low to be able to walk through the only doorway that is about three feet and nine inches tall. I thought how appropriate to bow before entering the place where God humbled himself to become man. Once inside, huge columns that were quarried locally are covered with paintings of saints. The Church was cool and dark, and the interior was bare, with no pews. The walls, which are mosaics depicting saints and angels, have recently been restored to their original sheen.

We stood in line and followed a large crowd of tourists to the right of the huge nave and to the right of the sanctuary, coming to the entrance of the shrine itself. It was a challenge stepping down the steep steps leading to the cave-like Shrine of the Nativity. There were candles burning in and around the shrine which was very small. We had to exit out a different way up a few steps that were not lighted very well.

It took us about two hours to tour the Church of the Nativity it was time for lunch when we finished the tour. Jerry our tour guide suggested we eat at the restaurant called St. George it was only about ten minutes away. The restaurant was very clean, the walls had scenic murals of the city painted on them. The food was exceptionally good. I ordered lamb chops with salad and they were terrific! The hummus was freshly made and delicious.

After lunch we were driven to the West Bank to the site of the Shepherd's Field, where the angel appeared to the shepherds to announce the birth of Jesus. While on our way over to the site we passed a warning sign which read: "This road leads to area "A" under Palestinian Authority." The entrance for Israeli citizens is forbidden, dangerous to your lives and is against the Israeli law, as we entered the West Bank.

Once there, a Palestinian Christian guide told us two stories from the Bible, one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament. As I sat toward the back of our group, under the shade of an olive tree, trying to hear the gentleman, I sat there thinking that the angels' good news was not given to the religious leaders or the rich nobles, but to the shepherds who were regarded with having the lowest status. The shepherds were ranked by the Jews as the poorest and their occupation was the most despised at that time. Yet, Jesus identified himself with this occupation when he called himself "the Good Shepherd."

We also visited a cave that very well could have been the one used by the shepherds in the story of Jesus' Nativity.

Next month I'll continue with our visit to the Garden Tomb.

Peace and Love,

Randy

\$100 for Good— Landon's Hope

Corey Hill—When Fr. Rich handed each of the vestry members an envelope with a hundred-dollar bill and told us that he wanted each of us to do a community outreach project, I *instantly* knew what I wanted to use the money for. I wanted to create backpacks for children coming into foster care that contained the essential first night items: toiletries, a stuffed animal, a small plaything, and a prayer for that child.

Then, COVID-19 hit, DCBS offices closed, and I decided that I needed to do something to help those affected, directly and indirectly, by this virus. My new project turned into gathering items for Landon's Hope a food bank, soup kitchen, and thrift store serving the families of Webster Co. where we live. My family has also been given relief by Landon's Hope, and I knew that they would help everyone in my community, especially those who's immigration status has them uncertain of how they will provide for their families because of lack of government assistance.

On Saturday evening, I contacted the director, asked her what they needed, and was told that they needed personal care items and cleaning products the most. While everyone, myself included, was concentrating on Lysol wipes and hand sanitizer, she told me that they needed items like laundry detergent and toothpaste. After our short conversation, my wife Jessa and I made a mad dash to the local Dollar General and Family Dollar to find what we could. We were able to find everything on the list she had given us!

On Monday afternoon, before they started cooking the Monday soup kitchen lunch, we dropped off: 8 dish soaps, 8 deodorants, 5 laundry detergents, 12 bottles of shampoo, 20 bars of soap, 3 packs of Boost shakes, 5 packs of feminine products, 9 tooth brushes, 5 tooth pastes, 4 packs of diapers, and 3 packs of wipes.

She told me that she already had people in mind to receive what the people of St. Paul's had provided!



What Our Youth are Missing

Leslie Newman—EYC has taken a turn with the rest of the world. Our students who normally spend their week days in school are learning from home. They have a school day, and homework, and the opportunity for tutoring support. They have telehealth opportunities for physical and mental health care. They have amazing resilience and appear to me to have good cheer. What they do not have is the routine of their normal school day, club meetings, extracurricular activities, sports events, dance lessons or time with friends.

They do not have Sundays at St. Paul's. They do not have Godly Play, time with Ms. Monessa, acolyte service, altar guild, or coffee hour. The younger children, especially, do not understand why they can't see Father Rich. They don't have EYC. The youth did not go to All Saints' for Spring Gathering. They will not be filling eggs for the hunt on Easter morning, or eating candy together as they fill the eggs. They will not attend the Maundy Thursday service or walk the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday or help hide eggs or flower the cross on Easter Sunday.

I say this to ask you to leave space in your thoughts and prayers for the children and youth of our parish during these trying times. I know most readers of EYC News are adults and I know adults have much responsibility during these days. But please remember our kids are experiencing major changes and feeling concerned, too. They need our time and help and encouragement. I know you know this, but so much is going on, it doesn't hurt to remind us all.

And I say this so I can tell you about a few things that our youth *do* have.

Building-Beds

Leslie Newman—We have good memories of a sunny Saturday morning spent at the Henderson Housing Authority (old Barrett) gymnasium at the behest of our Senior Warden Susan Sauls. The event was February 29, which now seems long ago. We were there for the Build-a-Bed Event where sponsors contributed funds to build 51 beds for children in our community. Alexis, Trae, Kaleigh, Miranda, Kiya and Rad, as well as Corey and Christy, got up early on Saturday morning and came together to meet the recipients of the beds, other community volunteers and each other, to assemble the beds from the pre-cut frames provided, to paint the beds the recipients' chosen colors of purple, green or blue and ultimately to tack a name plate on the headboard. Volunteers wrote inspirational messages on the side boards and slats.

Generous St. Paul's members contributed baskets containing mattress pads, sheets, comforters, pillows, stuffed animals, shampoo, soap, toothbrushes and toothpaste, which the recipients were given when they returned to pick up the beds on Sunday after the paint dried. Our crew enjoyed themselves so much, most stayed for the second session. I'm pretty sure the Habitat for Humanity crew was ready to adopt them! Thank you, Susan, for providing our youth the opportunity to serve their peers and our community.

A Different Spring Gathering

Leslie Newman—Our youth *did* have Spring Gathering, and the timing was such that it was right when we were becoming accustomed to self-isolation, March 20-22. Rather than gathering at their beloved All Saints, this was the first ever virtual Diocesan Youth Gathering, and it happened!

The Youth Council, including St. Paul's member Kaleigh Purdy, and wonderfully led by Mama Doyle, rallied on short notice to plan a weekend where youth from all over the Diocese of Kentucky were able to gather at different times throughout the weekend using Facebook, Instagram, and other available electronic technologies. They talked and laughed, they sang and shared and prayed, and they welcomed the upcoming sixth graders, and celebrated the two graduating seniors who are Diocesan and youth leaders.

And along the way, the youth heard and learned why it was not wise to meet together in person at this time, and how important community is, even when they are not together in the place they love. They were given activities to do at their homes, from Paducah to Louisville to Henderson and in between, and in between the virtual sessions. The youth learned how to create a vision board, and they learned how to adjust, and they tackled the theme of this year's Spring Gathering: Finding Our Why: how do you embrace the future even when it's not what you want or expect it to be?

They were guided by Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." How timely and how important. How *very* important.

Taking It to the Streets

Leslie Newman—Families have been welcomed to come to church on nice days to decorate the walks with sidewalk chalk for our passersby. The Purdys took that idea on the road, and they left colorful heartfelt messages for several of our parish families.

Families have undertaken to email and make and write cards to members of our St. Paul's family who are isolated in place due to their risk of contracting the virus, because we want these folks to know we remember and love them.

And Taking It to Cyberspace

Leslie Newman—Church Publishing Incorporated released a prayer book written especially for teens, Call On Me, free through April 15. EYC has used this book as we joined for compline via Zoom, and we made time to chat and catch up while we were together. Fr. Rich has joined the youth too, and it is obvious how glad they are to see him.

My hope is that this opportunity to gather is reassuring for our youth, that it emphasizes the importance of the social mandates, and that it provides a sense of structure and normalcy as well. Your ideas and suggestions for how to support our youth during these days are welcome. Please, let me hear your thoughts!

Vestry Notes

Due to protective measures, St. Paul's Vestry did not hold their scheduled meeting on March 17.

Facilitated on a videoconferencing platform, at a special called meeting on Friday, April 3, the Vestry approved an application for federal assistance through the Payroll Protection Program of the CARE Act.

The Vestry will next meet on Tuesday, April 21, again by videoconferencing in the Rector's study.

Good Friday Offering Still Needed

St. Paul's will still be taking up our Good Friday offering for the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East on, we're just going to have to delay that offering for the time being. Look for more information in next month's *Good News*, but keep in mind that the inconveniences we are experiencing pale in comparison to those trying to defend themselves from an unseen killer in bomb-damaged homes or refugee camps. Please use this time to consider how we can help our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land be Christ to people who's lives are effected more profoundly than we can imagine.

St. Paul's Youth Wins Award

Leslie Newman—St. Paul's Sarah Henderson, a 9th grade home-schooled student of Davidson Academy online and Stanford Online High School has been awarded an American Mathematics Competition 10A Prize given for mathematics excellence in honor of Maryam Mirzokhani, inspirational mathematician and first female winner of the Fields Medal. Congratulations to our Sarah!

Turning Lemons into Lemonade

Connie Walasky—As the annual ecumenical Lenten Luncheon approached, so did the Coronavirus. Our church pantries were stocked and St. Ann's Guild was ready to cook. Then the Lenten Luncheon was cancelled and everyone was told to "self isolate," leaving several of us to ask, "What to do with all that food?" At the same time, we were asking about children who were missing out on meals while school's cancelled.

So, we divided the food up and delivered it to Guild members who cooked our community-famous casseroles at home. Then Senior Warden Susan picked it up and brought it to Church where it was packed with other vittles and delivered to the Little Canaan Baptist Church and given to sixteen very appreciative families. There was enough food for four breakfasts and four hot lunches for each child. Once again St. Paul's has been

inspired by Luke 9:16: "Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to distribute to the people.."

Being Real Church

Susan Sauls—Let me tell you, this PJ/TV worship service thing is a great option for everyone's safety, but I'll sure be glad to get back with you, my St. Paul's family, and praise God *in person*. And although I'm pretty sure he hears us from our lounge chairs and from behind our coffee mugs, this social distancing sure makes me hungry for all of *you*.

Speaking of hungry, I was able to do a cool thing today on behalf of St. Paul's and *you*. A mother who needed food for her family called me at the Volunteer and Information Center. Since it was Sunday, I wasn't able to refer her to Christian Community Outreach or to the Salvation Army. Instead, my thoughts immediately went to the chicken casseroles we prepared and have frozen for situations just like this.

I called Fr. Rich to let him know I'd be borrowing one of the foil-covered, chicken and cheese-loaded frozen dishes (just in case he did an inventory check) and with his generous offer of help from the discretionary Fund, I was able to shop for a few extra items to add to the casserole contribution, to help sustain this mother's family for a few more days.

Then I thought of all the members of my St. Paul's family who had helped make it possible for me to help this hungry family: Connie Walaskay with all the chicken and other ingredients she prepared and froze for the Lenten Luncheon casseroles that never happened; all of you who lent your precious hands and time to create those "extra" casseroles; and of course, Fr. Rich and Dcn. Larry and the many ways our Discretionary Fund helps those in our community.

Providing for one family's need reminded me of how we *all* come together during a time of difficulty to take care of our St. Paul's family. As I walked away from this family's apartment, I felt good about how we had just helped them, and I realized just how *blessed* we are to be able to do what we are called to do in Christ's name.

It won't be long and we'll be back in our church home celebrating his Word *in person*, in the physically *real* way. In the meantime, if you get hungry for God and all his wonderment, tune in to our Parish's Facebook page the next several Sunday mornings. Just be certain your PJs are clean and your lounge chairs are in good working order, and you can feed on the Holy Word in preparation to go out and do God's work!

Financial Summary as of February 29, 2020

| | |
|--|----------|
| Pledged Income Received to Date | \$15,270 |
| Non-dividend Income from Investments to Date | \$0 |
| Other Operating Income to Date | \$13,896 |
| Operating Expenses to Date | \$57,590 |

St. Paul's Episcopal Church Staff

The Very Rev. Rich Martindale, Rector
The Rev. Richard Godbold, Priest Associate
The Rev. Larry Courtney, Deacon
Leslie Newman, EYC Director
Judy Duncan, Parish Secretary
Phone—270-826-2937

Service Times

Sunday 8:00 Rite I
10:00 Rite II
Wednesday 12:10 Rite II w/ anointing for healing

Vestry Ministry Teams *(*indicates Vestry liaison)*

Sr. Warden
Jr. Warden
Clerk
Treasurer

Susan Sauls
Bill Brodsky
Susie Watkins
Mike France

Budget and Finance
Worship and Music
Parish Life
Communications
Christian Formation and Youth
Building and Grounds

Mike France, *Bill Gentry, *Becky Carroll, Hugh Hennessey
Fr. Rich, *Jesse Gonzalez, *Susan Sauls, *Connie Spivey, Mike France
*Bill Brodsky, *Corey Hill, *Connie Spivey, Susan Sauls
*Lydia Johnson, *Jesse Gonzalez
*Marty White, *Bill Brodsky, *Corey Hill, Leslie Newman, Monessa Curry
*Bill Brodsky, *Bill Gentry, *Susan Sauls, Hugh Stone, Michael Minton,
Joe Mattingly

Outreach
Pastoral Care

Dcn. Larry, *Jesse Gonzalez, *Becky Carroll, *Marty White, *Lydia Johnson
Fr. Rich, Dcn. Larry, *Marty White

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

5 South Green Street
Henderson, KY 42420

www.stpauls-henderson.org

