

# St. Paul's Episcopal Church

## THE GOOD NEWS December 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.*

### Almost Nine Months Ago

*from the Rector*

Almost nine months ago, something happened that changed the world we live in. Almost nine months ago, we received news that called into question everything we had thought was safe and secure, everything we had thought was unalterably fixed and undeniably true. Every moment since, we have been forced to look for new meaning in every action, in every statement, in every nuanced glance.

Almost nine months ago, (the Church celebrates it on March 25) a messenger of the divine came to a single human girl to tell her that through her, the Creator of all that is, seen and unseen, was breaking into the flow of human time, was becoming one with humanity, and that everything, everything was being made new.

Oh, but you probably thought I was talking about something else, didn't you?

A few weeks ago, the Sunday after our digital Diocesan Convention, I quoted our Bishop, who was quoting a Facebook post from one of my priestly colleagues, who I suspect was quoting from somewhere else on the Internet, that she looked forward to living again in "precedented times." I was, I mean he was, I mean she was referring to the lately-oft-repeated sentiment that in the last nearly nine months we have been living in decidedly un-precedented times.

In one sense, of course, there really is no such thing as unprecedented times. Any student of history, any newspaper reader, any scroller through their own social media feed, will have noticed that, for good or ill, the "news" of today is always just another echo from our past.

Every victory we experience is a reflection of those of our fathers and mothers. Every one of our accomplishments is a manifestation to the gains made by our grandmothers and grandfathers. Every celebration we enjoy is part and parcel of a string of such joys stretching back to their parents, and their parents.

And every loss, and every tragedy, and every betrayal, and dare I say it, every plague is a re-creation, a new embodiment of the failings and disasters, natural, politi-

cal and moral, that fill page after page of the most sacred text we know.

Any student of the story of the People of God, any competent reader of the Bible, anyone who shows up and listens to the readings for even a few Sundays a year will recognize the truth of Scripture: "What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1:9)

But in a whole other sense, there is no such thing as "precedented times." In the history of the world, in the story of the People of God, in your story and in mine, in the fundamental flow of space and time itself, every moment is uniquely unprecedented. For those that weren't physically present or electronically tuned in last Sunday morning, I pointed out then that the double message of Advent calls us to recognize that every moment of every day is a gift, given just once, given to me or to you alone, a moment to accept and to proclaim the love of God.

Each moment, each morning, each evening, each midnight and cockcrow and dawn, is given as an unprecedented opportunity to love and to serve in Christ's name. The Christ who has once come into the world to redeem us, *will* come again to bring us home. In the meantime, we must use every single unprecedented moment with which we might be gifted to spread that very message of hope.

Anyway, this is the December *Good News*, so I wasn't really talking about anything else. I was waiting patiently with Mary in *our* unprecedented time for the fulfilment of the promise of salvation, for the whole world. Before I fill this page again, we will once again re-create, we will once again embody the wonderful story of our God made flesh in a frail and vulnerable child, whose days and years, whose fragile unprecedented moments, won life everlasting for you and for me.

We live in unprecedented times; we always have and we always will. Thanks be to God!

Peace and joy,

# Upcoming Events

We are delighted to continue to welcome you to join us for in-person worship, but please know that depending on your situation, you are always welcome to continue to experience all services livestreamed on St. Paul's Facebook page:

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

## Sundays

8 a.m. — Holy Eucharist, Rite I (In-Person and FB Live)

10 a.m. — Holy Eucharist, Rite II (In-Person and FB Live)

## Wednesdays

12:10 p.m. — Holy Eucharist, Rite II with prayers for healing (In-Person)

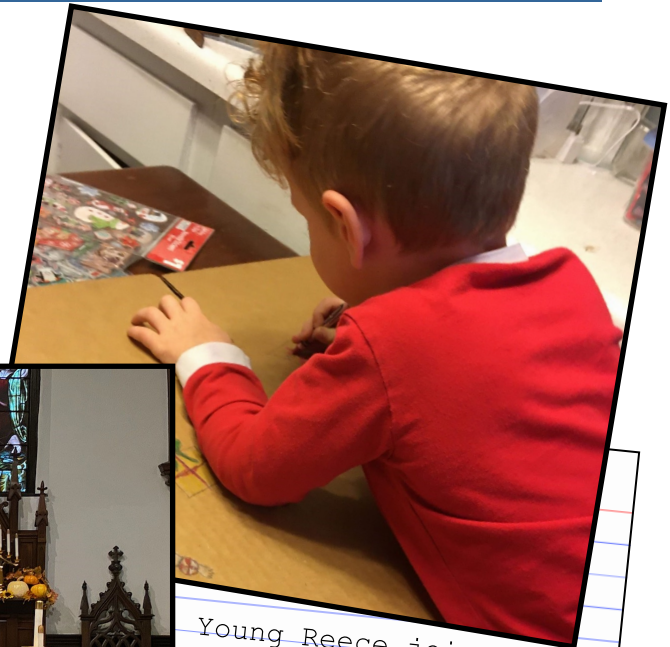
6 p.m.— Advent Program—Journeying the Way of Love (Zoom)

All other Parish activities continue to be suspended for now.

## Around the Parish



Susan and Marilyn joined a couple of others to do some fall clean-up during the Parish workday.



Young Reece joined his sister and his brothers and other family in other homes to prepare boxes for the River.



Once again this year, Iris and her crew made our Thanksgiving Altar look even more beautiful than it always is!

## Christmas Emotions

from the Deacon

In Advent Season we anticipate the return of Christ and celebrate His birth on Christmas Day. During this pandemic I have had plenty of time to reflect on the variety of emotions surrounding the very first Christmas. As well as the emotions we have experienced during this terrible pandemic. This Christmas we all face the fear and anxiety of a pandemic that will change how we celebrate Christmas.

So, let's look at a terrified Mary who asked the angel Gabriel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" But Mary was told she would be pregnant as a virgin. When she first saw Gabriel, she was frightened! How did she speak the words of humble consent rather than, screaming out for help?

I believe many years passed before Mary realized the meaning of her reaction to Gabriel's impossible message. Mary's mind and heart amazingly began to grasp the magnitude of Gabriel's words. Mary recalled the scriptures she had been taught about a prophecy concerning the coming of a Messiah. The uncertainty of it all, Mary thought of all these things and pondered them in her heart because she didn't know their full implication. It is all summed up in a Christmas song called, "Mary Did You Know."

When Mary and Joseph journeyed to Bethlehem, they faced rejection. There was no room in the Inn for the soon-to-be Savior. The stable nearby was the only place left for a King to be born. Therefore, Jesus Christ, Son of God came into this world a poor child lying in a manger, at Bethlehem.

The miracle of Christmas wasn't simply that the Messiah was born, but that God the Son willingly left his holy throne. That Holy night he quietly took upon himself the form of a helpless baby boy. A resident in heaven for all eternity, God's Son had never known physical pain, hunger, thirst, exhaustion or poverty. Now he would experience all of these, starting with his birth in a manger.

Fear comes into our story when the angel of the Lord appears to the shepherds living in the fields tending their sheep. When God's glorious light shined around all of the shepherds, they were terrified! But the angel of the Lord spoke to them the words that Mary heard, "Do not be afraid." The angel of the Lord told the shepherds today a child is born and to expect great joy into the world. The angel told the shepherds a child is born in the city of David, who is the Messiah. The shepherds witnessed suddenly with the angel a multitude of angels in heaven praising God!

All of these emotions, uncertainty, rejection, fear, and joy are summed up in Jesus, Immanuel, "God with us." Jesus is "God with us" at the very first Christmas, today and forever! Jesus unselfishly covered each of us with his eternal love, offering forgiveness and salvation. Christ became fully human and experienced every emotion so that we could come to truly know God's love! May God grant us all a Merry Christmas!

Peace and Love,

*Randy*

## \$100 for Good—River Christmas

**Bill Gentry**—Everyone at the table the day Fr. Rich distributed the Vestry \$100 outreach challenge knew where my portion was going to go. What none of us knew that day nearly a year ago, however, was just how much would change in the way we do nearly everything—including our beloved Christmas on the River.

St. Paul's has been packing Christmas boxes for towboat crews for more than twenty years, bringing some holiday cheer to the men and women who miss out on being with family this time of year as they keep things moving up and down the Ohio. There was a time when we were *personally* engaged with many of the crews. That changed big time after 9/11, but the changes this year have been even greater, as the pandemic brought such uncertainty into every decision.

The biggest issue as we began planning for this year was how and where the boxes could or should be packed. But while we figured that out, River Chaplain, Fr. Kempton Baldrige rushed enough boxes to us to care for fifty-four crews, saying that the decorations were one of the highlights of the program. Instead of gathering as usual, families came a took stacks of boxes home, bringing them back wonderfully covered with Christmas cheer. Thanks, kids!

We've used funds from the Vestry, and of course my \$100 from the Discretionary Fund to buy many of the other things to fill the boxes, Carol Noon and the Prayer Shawl Ministry stepped up with the popular seamen's scarves, but one thing was harder to find. "If a riverboat could pull up to a Walgreens," Fr. Kempton told me, "they would sell every toothbrush and tube of toothpaste they had on the shelves." Our own Dr. Kurt Wilson used his connections to solve our problem with enough brushes, paste, and floss to provide for each of the 460 members of those 54 crews.

So this year we don't get to get together to pack the boxes. But as soon as we're sure we've got everything we need, and as soon as we get the "all clear" from Fr. Kempton, I'm heading to the Seaman's Church Institute in Paducah with a couple helpers. From there, who knows how far the Christmas blessings will flow from the people of St. Paul's?





## Thanksgiving Gratitude

**Leslie Newman**—The St. Paul’s Thanksgiving altar is a tangible display of the bounty of the harvest of Henderson County farmers and of the time, talents and treasure of those who build it. This year we thank especially those who contributed pumpkins, gourds, mums and ferns, and especially our parish family who brought yours and to the Dawn and John Kelsey family, who delivered a truckload, and to Iris Gentry, Marty White and Rad Mattingly, who decorated the altar, the sanctuary and the entrances to the church.

The adornment is a symbolic display of the plenteousness we recognize in the Prayer for the Harvest of Lands and Water, prayer 42 found on page 828 of the Book of Common Prayer: *O gracious Father, who openest thine hand and fillest all things living with plenteousness: Bless the lands and waters, and multiply the harvests of the world; let thy Spirit go forth, that it may renew the face of the earth; show thy loving-kindness, that our land may give her increase; and save us from selfish use of what thou givest, that men and women [and youth and children] everywhere may give thee thanks, through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

EYC hopes our first Facebook Live Thanksgiving altar streaming onto your phone, iPad, computer or TV, brought the same sense of awe it brings those who see it “live”. We are grateful for however you saw it that we are gathered together to give thanks for the Lord’s blessings.

## Christmas on the River

**Leslie Newman**—EYC and friends of EYC are busy at home, decorating fifty-four boxes for the Seamen Institute’s Ministry on the River. There are 460 crew who will be working on these vessels on Christmas Day.

Fr. Kempton has sent an SOS to Bill Gentry for cards. He will be thrilled if we have one card per box and any more than that will be the proverbial icing on the cake. If you would like to write a card or cards to a mariner, and then deliver your greetings to the church or ask to have them picked up, the deadline is Monday

morning, December 7. You may sign the cards “From your friends at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Henderson, Kentucky” or as you deem fit. In previous years, EYC has begun making cards in early fall as a group project. Needless to say, this year is different. Fr. Kempton has emphasized the cards do not have to (but certainly *can* be) homemade. This year there are fewer boxes than normal and they will be built and filled in Paducah.

We are grateful to be part of this ministry to let these vital workers know we know they are unable to spend Christmas at home with their families and that we recognize that and remember them.

And if you aren’t able to write your cards in time for Ministry on the River but have the time and ability to write Christmas cards on behalf of our Parish, if you will do just that, please, and deliver them to St. Paul’s by Dec. 20, they will be delivered to the workers at our local health facilities to let them know we appreciate the overwhelming stress under which they are working during these trying times, as they care for the ill and infirm and some of the most vulnerable among us.

## Digital Fellowship

**Leslie Newman**—EYC continues to meet on Sunday nights at 7 pm, remotely, using the Zoom platform. If you miss seeing our youth and would like to join us some Sunday, you are welcome to drop in to let us know how you are doing and talk with our youth about how *they* are doing. Please contact me for instructions.

## Christmas Shoppers

**Leslie Newman**—Shopping to clothe-a-kid for Christmas is different this year, too. In past years, parishioners have contributed money for EYC to shop together and we have built many good memories over years of helping others in this way. This year we won’t be able to shop together, and we may have to shop online, but we will try our best to be good stewards of your good cheer. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to participate.

Or, if you would like to contribute for us to purchase items for Soldiers’ Sweethearts, located at the VA Center in Hanson and where the residents can “shop” for a gift for their spouse, or if you would like us to purchase pet food for New Hope or to the Henderson County Humane Society, let me know. In other words, if you want to donate things or money to buy things, as opposed to donating money, to help anyone in our community, if you will direct us, EYC will be glad to help you shop.

## Calendars Are Here!

The 2021 EYC Calendars have arrived and they are as beautiful as ever.

Get yours now for \$7 each (volume discounts available)

and support our Youth programs.

If you want a calendar but can’t pick it up, we will mail it for an additional \$3.

## Vestry Notes

At their meeting on Tuesday, November 17, conducted again by videoconference, St. Paul's Vestry:

- Received October financial reports noting that we transferred \$10,000 from invested Agency funds to meet cash flow needs.
- Expressed gratitude for members' positive and generous response to the fall pledge reminder letter,
- Arranged for each Vestry Member to sign the Senior Warden's letter for the 2021 Operating Fund Campaign.
- Heard the Worship & Music Cmte's in-process plans for St. Paul's Christmas Eve celebration.
- Continued looking at Parish goals and visioning.
- Praised the Nominating Cmte's progress toward a slate for the election of the 2021 Vestry.

The Vestry will next meet on Tuesday, December 15, again via videoconference.

## Vestry Nominations

Becky Carroll, Jesse Gonzales and Marty White are still taking suggestions for nominees to fill three three-year terms on the Vestry. Just pass on the name of someone you think will represent the Parish well, and the Committee will do the work of contacting suggested nominees and will put together a slate for election at the Annual Meeting, scheduled for Sunday, January 21.

## A St. Nicholas Celebration

This year, December 6, the Feast of St. Nicholas, falls on a Sunday. That is not, however, the greatest complication to Fr. Rich's annual celebration of his ordination as a Priest, this year, his 25th anniversary.

Through those years, Fr. Rich has invited children to join him in celebrating both his anniversary and the feast of the Church dedicated to a very real person who became a very real saint through acts of kindness, generosity and Christian love, especially for children.

In the last few years, right here on the red banks of the Ohio, that celebration has come to include not only gathering around the Altar for the Eucharist, but the decoration of gingerbread houses, a pizza supper, and shoes filled with chocolates and even a few coins.

This year, of course, such a gathering is simply not possible. But another tradition is the reading of a book telling a Christmas story of giving, a book that was presented to Fr. Rich by the children of St. Paul's half a decade ago. And maybe, just *maybe*, at least that tradition may find a way into a Sunday morning celebration.

## Christmas Memorials

If you'd like to place a poinsettia at the Altar during the Christmas season contact Judy at the Parish Office for more information.

## Journeying the Way of Love

At 6:00 on the four Wednesday evenings of the season of Advent, Fr. Rich will be leading a discussion based on the principles of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's book, *Journeying the Way of Love*. These four sessions as we await the coming of Christ, move through the first two chapters of the Gospel of Luke exploring themes of journeying through a Christ-like life of love, seven themes that Bp. Curry has promoted for most of his time as our PB. Luke's gospel provides a pattern for understanding how we can live the Way of Love as individuals, as families and friends, as a community, and out in the world.

This program, the first such program St. Paul's has offered in the pandemic months, will be offered on the Zoom videoconferencing platform. For information on being part of this journey of learning and refreshment, message or call Fr. Rich. Then come join the conversation—and the journey.

## Alice P. Taylor Concert Online

The annual Alice P Taylor Candlelight Service will be this Sunday, Dec 6 at 4:00. It will be online, featuring many talented performers from Henderson, some who would never be able to participate in the traditional format. It will premiere on the Henderson Area Arts Alliance fb page as an event. It will also be broadcast at 8:00 Christmas morning on WSON. The organizing committee, which includes our own Susan Sauls, wants to extend huge thanks to all the performers, and also to Darrin Phegley for his fantastic technical expertise!

## Christmas at St. Paul's

Christmas Eve—Monday, December 24  
5:30 p.m. – Christ Mass (Rite II)  
(In-person or Facebook Live)

9:00 a.m. Christmas Day  
Blessing of the Toys (Zoom)

## Financial Summary as of October 31, 2020

<b>Pledged Income Received to Date</b>	<b>\$106,189</b>
<b>Non-dividend Income from Investments to Date</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
<b>Small Business Funds Available</b>	<b>\$27,400</b>
<b>Other Operating Income to Date</b>	<b>\$38,793</b>
<b>Operating Expenses to Date</b>	<b>\$200,049</b>

## 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  
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[www.stpauls-henderson.org](http://www.stpauls-henderson.org)

