



Mosaic of the Journey to Bethlehem (1315-1320)
Church of the Holy Spirit, Chora, Turkey

THE EPISTLE

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IN THIS ISSUE

ADVENT

John Keble — Page 3

ST. PAUL'S—A SPECIAL PLACE

Vestry reflections — Page 4

TAKING ST. PAUL'S WHEREVER THEY GO

Meet Teta Moehs and William Begley — Page 5

WATCHING AND WAITING FOR CHRIST, WITH CHILDREN

Allison Winter introduces Advent with and for children at St. Paul's— Page 6

PARISH HIKE

Community Building in the Shenandoahs, by Alex Rodriguez— Page 6

PARISH CLEAN UP DAY

A dynamic crew — Page 7

ON MATTERS OF THE SOUL

Ed Loucks reports — Page 7

TO SEE THROUGH A GLASS BRIGHTLY—THE SACRAMENTAL MISSION OF ANGLO-CATHOLICISM: PART I

John Orens — Page 8

OCTOBER VESTRY REPORT

Preston Winter — Page 10

“NEEDLEPOINT”

A Poem by Jon Delmas Wood— Page 10

BREAD FOR THE JOURNEY

“Music in a New Oxford Movement, Consonance, Dissonance and ...Resolution,” presented by Jeffrey Smith — Page 11

ADVENT: RELAXING INTO THE PRESENT

Dear Friends:

I think I have probably forgotten more sermons than I've eaten hot dinners. Certainly during discernment and seminary days the now clergy spend an awful lot of time sitting in pews and listening. It's interesting that the sermons still living in my head are those that caused a stir—where the preacher said something outrageous, deliberately controversial, or deliciously provocative. Perhaps the sermon I remember best from my childhood village is the time the vicar took a theological swipe at Mrs. Thatcher, and those scandalized English faces during coffee hour.

A few weeks back Fr. Shawn preached a sermon that was far from controversial, but certainly made us all sit up, think, and talk—which, after all, is one of preaching's primary goals. He talked about two “myths” which weigh down not only our church—but our lives, our jobs, even our society.

First, the myth of the “golden past”: the idea that years gone by were always better years—times where milk and honey flowed, and all was well and good. And while we know that the church as a whole was riding high in recent decades, we also know, thanks to cognitive science, that we remember feelings far better than we remember facts.

Second, the “myth of progress”: the determination that we must al-



THE REV'D RICHARD WALL

ways be headed somewhere—that contentment with our current lot should never be enough, and we must be working towards something bigger, better, or different: the curse of “where are we going next?” Interestingly, this myth fascinated Karl Popper and others of the world's most eminent philosophers, and especially the assumption of inevitable improvement.

It seems that me that in a multitude of contexts we float somewhere in the flux in-between the two, stretching our limbs so we can somehow grasp both. As I heard Fr Shawn preach I realized that the two can also become one, as “progress” becomes a blueprint for recapturing the past.

This idea of casting eyes in two different directions has distinctly Advent undertones. For over these next few weeks we are asked to do the

ST. PAUL'S PARISH SEEKS TO RESTORE ALL PEOPLE TO GOD AND TO EACH OTHER, THROUGH SACRAMENTAL WORSHIP AND CHRIST-LIKE LIVING.

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same. We cast them back as we sweep across the history of Israel, and listen to the great Old Testament prophets as they proclaim the coming of the Messiah.

And yet as we remind ourselves of our roots we also look ahead, as we continue a collective pilgrimage. We look towards our celebration of a birth some 2000 years ago, whose grace and beauty remain surprising. And we cast our eyes further still towards an unknown future, and a day for which Christians have watched, waited, and hoped for two thousand years: the coming of the Son of Man, ushering in God's reign on earth. Listen carefully to our Advent readings and hymns: notice the images of darkness and light, fire and chaos, as we pray for this divine in-breaking.

In Advent it's almost as if time is purified, refined, and distilled, as we remember the past and stretch forwards into the future. We blend the past glory with the not-yet with all that is to come: the vulnerabilities, possibilities, promises and ambiguities of our future.

And yet looking deep within, looking back, gazing ahead, can never be enough. God calls for our very best, so still we are called to more. Personal examination, doing the hard work that spiritual growth demands is fine—but Advent isn't a season to be spiritualized—it's not just four weeks for retreats.

You see, the past is important—but stay there and it becomes a strait-jacket for the present. And yes, the future is critical; our faith calls us to prophesy, to look for the fulfillment of God's promises—yet we can so easily fear or fixate on what lies ahead. We can obsess with what is yet to be, what the future promises or even threatens. And our vision becomes so focused that we begin missing the present, blind to the here-and-now, to all the needs and joys and tragedies that God dangles under our noses. It's easy

to miss Advent's vocation and deep longing.

Fr. Shawn suggested that the primary victim of our fixation on past and future is, of course, the present:—that we lose our sense of joy and wonder in God abiding with us in the here-and-now. In the 17th Century Jean-Pierre De Caussade wrote of the "sacrament of the present moment." God's grace and presence infuse and fill and transform and redeem every moment of every day. Everything, everyone, every place, filled with God, becomes a moment of communion. He taught us to experience every moment as a holy sacrament—and then to enjoy the end of our frantic strivings for holiness and the beginning of resting in the Light of Christ.

If Advent is a season for waiting, then perhaps our first work is simply to focus on the church and world placed before us not yesterday or tomorrow but today. It might be a good Advent theme for our own lives, families, and careers too: an unexpected source of rest and refreshment. The point being, of course, that Advent waiting is no excuse for idleness, but an opportunity to focus more fully on the needs of the present. The Prophets, after all, spoke of the coming of the Messiah as part of their thirst for justice and righteousness. If Advent is anything, it's painful waiting. Not hiding but waiting with both feet on the ground and in the world, in the noise and bustle and mess, rather than digging ourselves some quiet hole or finding a high tree to climb.

Advent collects call us to wake up. to put on the armor of light *now* in the time of this mortal life, and to make Advent more about earth than

heaven. These weeks remind us how much there is left to do. And if we are to be ready for Jesus we must step forwards and name whatever darkness hides the light—maybe extreme poverty, maybe gross inequality, maybe terrible discrimination, maybe those in any land who have no access to health care. Advent is a season about the whole world.

This point bears repeating. Too often our looking ahead can be another way of focusing on ourselves. Asking "what's next?" for our church can easily become a code word to numerical growth: more people, more money, programs to entertain, everything bigger and better for us to enjoy. And yet the cries of the Advent prophets call us back to our primary mission: not numbers, but people. Not success, but transformation. And the peculiar faithfulness that can come only from following a crucified Messiah.

Our Advent motif is not improvement, or expansion, or growth. It is, instead, the idea of continuing our journey with and towards God. Advent waiting is, in a sense, a relaxing into the present: intentional thankfulness for all that God gives. As I look around St Paul's, and as I talk with colleagues in other parishes, I give thanks again and again for all that God gives here. Every day of every week these doors open for worship, service, and ministry. On Sundays in particular I am both delighted and humbled by the gifts of time and creativity we see all around. This is a place with a divine calling to so much. I look forward to sharing this next Advent journey with each one of you.

This comes, as always, with my love and prayers

- Fr Richard

Advent



*Why, then, in sad and wintry time,
Her heavens all dark with doubt and
crime,
Why lifts the Church her drooping
head,
As though her evil hour were fled?
Is she less wise than leaves of spring,
Or birds that cower with folded wing?
What sees she in this lowering sky
To tempt her meditative eye?*

*She has a charm, a word of fire,
A pledge of love that cannot tire;
By tempest, earthquakes, and by wars,
By rushing waves and falling stars,
By every sign her Lord foretold
She sees the world is waxing old,
And through that last and direst storm
Descries by faith her Saviour's form.*

*Yet is He there: beneath our eaves
Each sound His wakeful ear receives:
Hush, idle words, and thoughts of ill,
Your Lord is listening: peace, be still.
Christ watches by a Christian's hearth,
Be silent, "vain deluding mirth,"
Till in thine alter'd voice be known
Somewhat of Resignation's tone.*

*But chiefly ye should lift your gaze
Above the world's uncertain haze,
And look with calm unwavering eye
On the bright fields beyond the sky,
Ye, who your Lord's commission bear,
His way of mercy to prepare:
Angels He calls ye: be your strife
To lead on earth an Angel's life.*

*Think not of rest; though dreams be
sweet,
Start up, and ply your heaven-ward
feet.*

*Is not God's oath upon your head,
Ne'er to sink back on slothful bed,
Never again your loins untie,
Nor let your torches waste and die,
Till, when the shadows thickest fall,
Ye hear your Master's midnight call?*

John Keble, The Christian Year

Advent Forum: "The Christmas Story at the National Gallery of Art"

Dr. Ian Boxall, Associate Professor of New Testament at Catholic University

Dec. 3 and 10, at 10:15 a.m.

AND

"The Christmas Story" public TOUR at the National Gallery of Art

with Dr. David Gariff, NGA Senior Lecturer, Dec. 18 and Dec. 22 at 2 p.m.

Vestry Reflections: St. Paul's — A Special Place

Jeanne Smith

I take great joy in our wonderful, eclectic community; its inspiring worship that engages all our senses; and its mission, outreach, formation, and fellowship. My hope and prayer for everyone at St. Paul's is that we recognize all that we have here, are moved to share it widely, and can find it in our hearts to continue to support it joyfully and generously with our time, our talents, and the fruits of both our labors and God's glorious abundance.

Preston Winter

St. Paul's has been home for our family, beginning with our wedding, and continuing with the baptism of our two sons. There are so many members and clergy who have given gifts to us through teaching, care, and fellowship, and who have also invited us to serve in the Parish in ways that have enriched our lives and strengthened our ability to spread light into our community.

Scott Spaulding

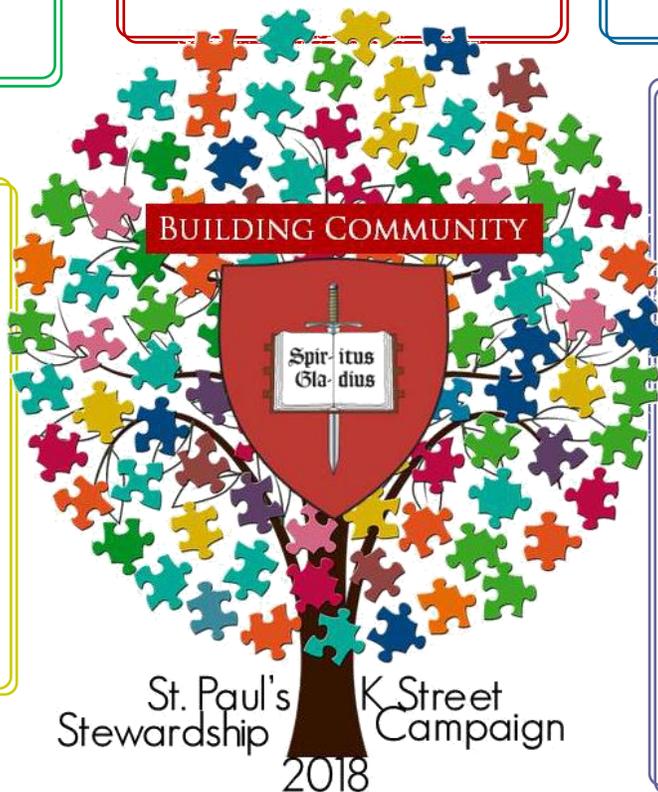
There are so many things that make St. Paul's special: liturgy and music, grate patrol and other outreach, formation offerings, and the consistently high quality of the preaching. However, the thing that struck me 12 years ago when I first came to St. Paul's--and which keeps me coming back—is the community itself. At St. Paul's I found a genuine, authentic, welcoming and supportive Christian community.

John Orens

St. Paul's is the meeting place of heaven and earth where, in liturgical splendor and prayerful silence, we encounter the living God. It is here that we are brought into God's kingdom, joined together in loving communion, and formed into the image of Christ. And it is here that we receive the grace to dream anew and to labor, as did our Anglo-Catholic forebears, for God's new world of justice, beauty, truth, and joy.

Pat Byrd

The proclamation of God's love through our inspirational worship, heartfelt community outreach, our insightful and engaging educational events, and our glorious music played a big part in my reasons for coming to St. Paul's. However, over the years, I have come to realize it's our community that keeps me coming back. My journey with Christ continues to be one of highs and lows, but I never feel I'm alone on that journey. My St. Paul's family has been, and I believe will always be by my side. My pledge will help ensure this fact for me and for future generations to come.



David Schnorrenberg

In everything it does, St. Paul's is committed and energetic. Whether it's worship, mission, outreach, pastoral care, formation, fellowship, or stewardship, the parishioners of St. Paul's are all in. That is a testament to a Christian community that will endure. It also makes a special place to go to church.

Ann Korky

Three principal reasons for my commitment to St. Paul's: (1) sacramental worship centered on the celebration of the Eucharist in the conviction that Christ is truly present in the Sacrament of the Altar; (2) opportunities to seek and serve Christ in the poor and needy and (3) a community of fellow believers whose faith reinforces my own.

Matt Leddicotte

To me, the first and foremost reason I give to St. Paul's is to say thank you—not to the Parish or for what it does, but to God without whom all would be for naught. And then it becomes a regular reminder of how I should—and don't often—order the priorities of my life. Start with God and saying thank you, the rest will follow and sometimes will even fall into place.

Taking St. Paul's Wherever They Go

Ed Britton

St. Paul's is a community defined by our common commitment to create a glimpse of the City which God has promised his people. In seeking to bring together the best of what we can do – in worship, music, ministry to those in need, our physical fabric, and all that we do – we create among us some element of what God has intended for his people. That is St. Paul's.

Gwyneth Zakaib

It all comes down to one word for our family: gratitude. We're grateful for 18 years (and counting) of bountiful blessings. So many have given of their time, talent and treasure over the years to make St. Paul's the special place it is. We want to join in giving, too, so that we can help continue this beautiful worship tradition, welcome new members of our church family, and discover new ways to reach out to our community.

Laurel Malson

St. Paul's is special because it is a community in which everyone is loved, God is encountered readily, and care is taken with liturgy and music, as expressions of, as vehicles for our experience of, the transcendent beauty of holiness.

Chris Mixer

St. Paul's is a community that is serious about its faith without the narrow-mindedness and loss of perspective that too often accompanies seriousness. At St. Paul's we also never stop trying, however imperfectly, to represent Christ in our broader community and to remember that faith without works is dead. In those ways St. Paul's may not be unique among churches, but it is a very uncommon place.

Teta Maehs



Bill Begley, Alina Begley, Teta Moehs

The life of a diplomat is probably well known among St. Paul parishioners. Not only is K street in Foggy Bottom; it shares the neighborhood with the State Department.

Teta Moehs and Bill Begley and their daughter Alina have been blessed to be associated with both. Teta has served for 15 years with State, and the family's history with St. Paul's is just as long. With overseas postings interspersed with short visits until this summer, they may be vaguely familiar to some in the congregation. But St. Paul's has been a source of friendship and sustenance in spite of long absences.

Teta and Bill became a part of the Episcopal family in 1999 when Teta, born and raised in the Roman Catholic Church, was received, Bill, a Methodist, was confirmed, and Alina was baptized in Seoul, Korea, officiated by Bishop of the Armed Forces George Packard. Bill trained and served at the military congregation as a Lay Eucharistic Minister at the Memorial Chapel in Seoul, and the family was active in church communities in Beijing, Berlin and Leipzig.

When Teta joined the Foreign Service while living in South Korea and then came for four months of initial training at the Foreign Service Institute in 2002, she visited St.

Paul's for the first time. She knew about St. Paul's from purchasing a CD during a visit to the National Cathedral the year before, while here to take the entrance exam. Captivated by the music (she and Bill were choir members at St. Bonifatius in Wiesbaden, Germany, for many years), and missing her family who remained in Seoul, Teta readily found a second home near her Foggy Bottom hotel. Teta enjoyed the Monday night discussion group, and found faith, fellowship and friends through church activities and regular attendance at Sunday services and Evensong.

In the last fifteen years, Bill, Teta and Alina attended services at St. Paul's whenever they were in DC temporarily. During six months of training in 2002, for example, Alina became a boat bearer during special services. Their cat Mina respectfully declined to join other animals for a blessing, however. In 2014, Alina was at college in Leipzig, Germany, when Teta and Bill spent nearly a year here. They attended French training and lived in Rosslyn, often walking to church via the Key Bridge. Once again, attending St. Paul's, sustaining old friendships and making new ones, brought joy and faithful connections for those times spent away.

Following their last assignment to the U. S. Embassy in Conakry, Guinea, Teta and Bill returned in July to the house they bought twenty years earlier in Springfield, Virginia, not knowing at the time that Bill's job transfer to Seoul after less than a year would keep them overseas for many years. Teta's assignment at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs will keep them here for a while this time. Carried all these years by their love of St. Paul's, its mission, people, worship, and music, they are very happy to be a part of this wonderful community!

Watching and Waiting for Christ, with Children

Allison Winter

Advent is one of my favorite times in the atrium, our Christian formation program for children. Our prayers, songs, and candles seem to have extra light and warmth this time of year. Advent means “coming.” Jesus comes to us daily in His word and sacraments, in the prayers we share with each other and with our children. And Jesus comes to us in special ways in Advent and Christmas.

Each week we contemplate



prophesies, some of the earliest proclamations of the coming of Christ. We learn that prophets are those that listen very closely to God and share God’s plans for God’s people. Just as the people of God waited many, many years for the coming of Christ, we are waiting to celebrate the coming of the baby Jesus at Christmas, and anticipating his second coming at the Parousia, when God will be all in all.

We read these Messianic prophecies to help us explore the question: “who is this King?”

I hope they might enrich your own Advent devotions each week. The prophets tell us: God has a wonderful gift for us, God loves us and wants to be with us, God is coming here!

*The people who walked in darkness, have seen a great LIGHT.” Isaiah 9:1

*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: look, the young woman is with child and will give birth to a

son, and will call him IMMANUEL. Isaiah 7:14

*But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will rule over ISRAEL. Micah 5:2

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, ALMIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE.” Isaiah 9:6

God came to Earth not as a great warrior or mighty ruler, but as a little baby born in an unimportant town. God, who is so great and mighty, seems to love small things... and small children. In these dark days of winter, what a blessing it is to light a candle with a child and sing, “this little light of mine, I’m going to let it shine... let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!”



Parish Hike

Alex Rodriguez

On the brisk Saturday morning of November 4th, 16 people drove two hours from Washington to Shenandoah National Park. Friends of all ages ascended Stony Man Mountain together and overlooked a stunning mountain landscape of rolling oranges and yellows.

The approximately 2-mile loop came and went quickly as friends old and new chatted and told stories throughout the trail; the descent was filled with the surprise of rain that certainly quickened our paces back to the refuge of our cars. On our return home, the group made a pit stop in Little Washington to reward ourselves with a well-deserved lunch.



Parish Clean-up Day

Amazing effort by a small team (CB Wooldridge, Jeanne Smith, Tina Mallett, Katherine Britton, Ed Britton, Randy Summerfield, Louisa Nickerson, Brent Cantley, Mark Pierzchala, Chris Mixter, Dick Best, Larry Cook and Linda Wilkinson) who rolled up their sleeves, climbed on roofs, washed, swept, raked and cleaned UP the grounds and church on Saturday, November 4. The team:

- Cleaned and polished all pews and choir, chapel and nave altar rails
- Cleaned wax off kneelers, pews and floors
- Cleaned air vents and ceiling pipes in sacristy
- Cleaned ceiling air vents at Lady Altar and in Pillsbury hallways
- Cleaned and organized the shelves in the kitchen
- Washed sacristy windows, and lower-level windows and window wells facing the parking lot
- Cleared leaves and nuts from all roof drains over the Atrium and

- Carwithen House.
- Cleaned stair handrails to atrium and rear entrance
- Raked leaves from gardens and sidewalks
- Swept front entrance.
- Had a delightful lunch and great fellowship!

Advent calls on us to ready ourselves, to Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord. This includes getting our house in order! Thank you to our outstanding team.



On Matters of the Soul

Ed Loucks

A friend told me a story about a visit he made to an unfamiliar city. He rented a car that had no GPS, and it did not take him long to figure out he was lost. He pulled into a gas station/convenience store to get directions. He quickly discovered that the cashier spoke very little English. Furthermore, since he was a user of public transportation, he did not know his way around town.

He realized he was in a pickle. Then, a warm friendly voice behind him said, “You are going in the wrong direction. I know where you want to go, and I am going in that direction. Would you like to follow me?”

This is a perfect parable of becoming a Christian. First, you become aware that you are going the wrong way, and you don’t know how to find the right way. Then someone comes to your rescue and says, “Follow me.” Realizing that you are lost is called repentance. Being willing to follow a new person in the right direction is like becoming a disciple of Christ.

Many of us have comforted ourselves in the misleading idea that

once we have made a public confession, we are home free—that no more effort is required on our part. This was true in the evangelical subculture in which Deb and I grew up. We were taught “once saved, always saved.” In day-to-day practice it seems to be true in the Christian Church in general. Show up on most Sundays, plop something in the plate, and go home to life as usual. The question we should be asking is, “Where does God go between Sundays?”

In our “On Matters of the Soul” spiritual growth and fellowship group we have touched on this question, and will continue to do so in the weeks ahead. What better example do we have than that of Jesus Christ?

When we are asked, “Are you a Christian?” we should pause to consider, what does the word “Christian” mean in today’s culture? Ask anyone on the street what the word means, and you will get a dozen different answers, most of them negative. Try answering, “I follow Jesus.” That may cause the conversation to be very short. Or it may give you an opportunity to talk about being a disciple of

Christ Jesus. Be prepared!

How do we follow Jesus? St. Paul’s mission statement says something about living “Christ-like lives.” How do we do that? By studying the scriptures, talking with fellow seekers, and praying for guidance. This requires some effort. Becoming a Christian is the beginning of the journey, not the destination. Jesus does not say “Worship me.” He says “Follow me.”

In our small group, and in others like it, we learn together how to follow Christ. We are beginning s new study by Richard J. Foster (full disclosure—he’s a Quaker) entitled *Celebration of Discipline: The Path of Spiritual Growth*. In it he tells us the spiritual disciplines Jesus practiced, and shows us how light the yoke of Jesus really is.

We meet most Monday evenings at 7 PM in the Common Room, but you can learn about our schedule in the Sunday bulletin or on the bulletin board across from the Guild Room/Library. Come join us. Or better yet, start your own group. Free consulting is available!



To See Through A Glass Brightly:

John Orens

It is a strange story, but then most stories about Anglo-Catholics are strange, especially those that involve the clergy. This one begins in 1954 in the working-class village of Hyde in greater Manchester, England. A fifteen-year-old boy named Kenneth Leech was making his way through the streets near his home. His family was very poor—they had neither a telephone nor an indoor lavatory—and his parents were utterly unchurched. His father called himself a Methodist, by which he meant that it was the Methodist church to which he did not go. Ken was painfully aware of his poverty, and being intellectually precocious and politically alert, it is not at all strange that at the age of fifteen he announced that he had become a Marxist.

But what happened soon after was very strange indeed. As he wandered through the back streets that fateful day, he stumbled upon a small Anglo-Catholic church. There was nothing impressive about the building, certainly nothing that would entice a rebellious teenager to enter. But Ken went in anyway. Apart from a Burne-Jones stained glass window, all that he noticed were some ugly statues. And yet, he later recalled, “I felt a strong compulsion to pray and a very powerful sense that I was on holy ground. At the time I did not understand, and could not articulate, what any of this meant.”

Only later did he associate this unexpected epiphany with the presence of the reserved sacrament and the reality that this was “a place where others had knelt before me, a place where prayer had been valid.” But the die had been cast. To his father’s dismay—indeed, his disgust—Ken declared himself an Anglican.

Ten years later he was ordained, and the rest of his life would be dedicated to the Catholic faith, to the poor, and to the struggle for a just society. It is, as I said, a strange story: strange that Ken decided to enter that church; strange, given our preoccupation with church property that its doors were open; strange that Ken found in Anglo-Catholicism the spiritual foundation of his revolutionary politics. And this is only the beginning, for his epiphany stands in a long line of strange and radical epiphanies that stretch back to the beginning of the Oxford movement nearly two centuries ago.

But how can this be? How could a movement, started by a small group of Tory academics ‘neath the dreamy spires of Oxford, inspire an enduring tradition of political radicalism? How could a movement, whose leaders were indifferent to ceremonial, inspire the ritual revolution of which our worship is the fruit? How could a movement suspicious of biblical criticism and hostile to theological speculation open the door to the marriage of ancient truth and modern knowledge? How could our Tractarian forebears, who were given to the most morbid forms of asceticism and introspection inspire the joyful spirituality we have made our own? And if this laundry list of questions seems exhausting, let me boil it down to just two. How could a movement that was ever looking backwards inspire so many to look forward? And how might it inspire us to light again the flame of faith and the passion for mission?

The obvious place to begin looking for an answer is Oxford on the July day in 1833 when John Keble preached the sermon that John Henry Newman later memorialized as the open salvo of the Catholic revival in the Church of England. But long before then some-

thing had been a stir in the world; a yearning for a truth deeper than the truths of common sense, and for a life richer than the commercial enterprise and pomp of the age could provide.

So when Keble accused the English state of apostasy, when he and his fellow Tractarians threw down the gauntlet in defense of the Church, they struck a chord that resonated more deeply than they themselves had imagined. It was a chord whose intertwined notes—spiritual, political, and theological—summoned their contemporaries to a sacramental mystery that was undefinable yet surpassingly bright. What they proclaimed was not simply that the Church is more than an arm of the State or that its ministry rests on the apostolic succession of bishops. They proclaimed the Church to be a holy society, embodying the life of God for it is nothing less than the body of Christ. In other words, they taught that the Church is a sacrament.

But what did this mean? Sacrament is a word we bandy about so often that it may seem a mere abstraction or, even worse, a category in a game of ecclesiastical one-upmanship. Poor Protestants have only two but we lucky Catholics have seven. Part of the problem lies in the classic definition of a sacrament that we know so well. A sacrament is an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace. It is concise. It is memorable. It is even true, but in one sense it is misleading.

A sacrament is no mere sign pointing to something else. The material stuff of a sacrament does point beyond itself, of course, but it also points to itself as the trysting place between God and his people. To see a sacrament, stuff and all, for what it truly is, is like leaving the darkness of Plato’s cave and entering the realm of light.

The Sacramental Mission of Anglo-Catholicism: Part I

So what did the Tractarians see in their glass when they gazed in wonder at the Church? Perhaps it would be better to ask a more challenging question. What did their contemporaries see when they gazed at the Church? What do our contemporaries see when they gaze at the Church today? What do we see: a club for the religiously likeminded; an institution for inculcating good manners and respect for authority; a museum of spiritual antiquities; a refuge for aesthetes; a haven for the saved? All these describe some corner of the Church Catholic, but if this is how we envision the Church, then—as John Keble warned his parishioners - “there is one among you whom you do not see”: Christ present at the altar; Christ present in the corporate life of our communion and our diocese; Christ present here in the souls and bodies of each and every one of us.

It was their vision of this present presence that gave the Oxford movement its missionary zeal. It is this same vision that makes the Tractarians’ message as challenging today as it was in 1833. For if the Church, and we ourselves its members, are a sacrament of Christ’s body in the world, we are a sacrament of the world as God intends it to be. By virtue of our baptism into the body of Christ, you and I are icon bearers and light bearers to a world adrift in darkness; a darkness that the light we carry both illumines and reveals.

The Tractarians saw this darkness, the idolatry of wealth, power, and success that afflicts our age as it did theirs, clouding our vision of God, of one another, and ultimately of our very souls. And, as our Oxford forbears understood, the sacramental mystery of the Church is inseparable

from the sacramental mystery of those we sacrifice to the idols of the age, ourselves included.

Consider the eloquent plea of Edward Bouverie Pusey, who was otherwise the most longwinded and ponderous of the Tractarians: “You would not knowingly deck your walls with pictures,” he told his congregation, “*while man, the image of God and the representative of Christ you clothe not; you would not knowingly multiply delicacies upon yourselves, while men, like yourselves, members of Christ, and Christ in them, is an hungered.*” In other words, if we do not see Christ in them—if we do not confess our own vulnerability—we shall not see Christ in ourselves. And present though he may be, we shall not see him aright in our art or in our worship. Such is the price of sacramental blindness.

But if we fix our eyes on the luminous reality of the Church we shall see him and our mission to carry his light into the darkness will be inescapable, as it was to the brave priests and religious who labored in the slums of Victorian Britain and America. Their ministry among the discarded and the despised is a heroic chapter in the history of the Catholic movement, and a subversive one as well, for their crusade against rented pews, their insistence that the Church must encompass prostitutes as well as peers, undermined the class-bound moral distinctions that were a prop of respectable society.

And as the nineteenth century drew to a close, some Anglo-Catholics pressed their sacramental insight further still. They grasped that it was not enough for Christians to relieve suffering. Injustice itself would have to be challenged and the world built

anew.

The Kingdom of God is the world as God intends it to be, and if the Church is the sacrament of the Kingdom, they argued, then it is the Church’s responsibility—its spiritual responsibility—to see God’s world enfleshed and our common life transformed. As for the objection that the Kingdom belongs to the distant and intangible future, these Anglo-Catholics pointed to an oft forgotten truth: sacraments remember, literally knit together, the past, the present, and the future.

The most politically outspoken members of this prophetic cohort called themselves Christian Socialists. One of them, Charles Gore, is memorialized in one of our stained-glass windows. Kenneth Leech was another. And, as many of you know, I have written a biography of the most bohemian cleric of them all, Stewart Headlam. They did not share the same political agenda. Some were anarchists, some were Marxists, some were patient reformers, and some were conservatives whose fidelity to Catholic tradition drove them to conclusions that they themselves could scarce have imagined.

It is not their legislative nostrums that matter. Their sacramental vision is our sacred dowry, a holy summons reminding us that an Anglo-Catholicism, disengaged from the struggle for justice, is a counterfeit, a dark glass in which neither past nor future nor Christ eternally present can be seen.



Editors Note: Part II of this article will be included in the January 2018 edition of The Epistle.

October Vestry Report



Preston Winter

During our October Vestry meeting, we invited Dr. Jeffrey Smith to give an update on the music program, a summary of which follows.

Dr. Smith praised the excellent group of children and adults involved in St. Paul's music program. The talent and commitment of all those involved has been a great encouragement to him. The Chorister program is going well, and Dr. Smith continues to emphasize the importance of a broad youth formation that the program provides. Not only do children learn music, but Jeffrey also provides teaching about the content and meaning of the pieces that they are singing. Learning by doing is a critical aspect of this process.

The 2017 Music Gala was also very successful in its fundraising, but also in the linking music and mission with our connection to the Bishop Walker School. Preparations for the Gala were a positive team experience and helped further unite the various members of our different choirs.

Dr. Smith also has a vision of integrating the children's choir into services other than Evensong. Various ideas are under consideration. He also noted that the current choir space is very well located and can be enhanced

by some small investments, with a planned addition of music cubbies in the near term. The organ scholar has also been a tremendous help to the choir during this season.

Following this, Gwyneth Zakaib shared an update on the St. Paul's website re-design. Our website developer, Openbox, has shared the structure as well as an organization chart and pictures, colors and fonts and has now begun the back-end development for a full transfer of information when the site is ready. Editing of current site content will also continue in the coming weeks.

Fr. Richard gave his Rector's Report, discussing a meeting with the diocesan Arch-Deacon to explore the idea of inviting a deacon into the parish. At this time, the timing and profile of a deacon is unclear, and the Bishop would decide the final assignment in this case, but it is something to keep in mind.

The Executive Committee reported on administrative matters and the vestry then voted to approve \$5,700 in funds from the Music Gala for construction of new music cubbies for the choir room.

The Treasurer gave a summary of her report, indicating that 2017 patterns for pledge income are consistent

with prior years, and there is no foreseen deficit in pledge income. Plate income will likely be lower than projected, but since expenses are lower than projected, we should end with a lower year-end deficit than what was budgeted and projected for 2017. In addition, the parish has selected an audit firm that will begin its work soon to review the 2016 accounts.

Mr. Mixer reported for the Buildings and Grounds committee, indicating that the currently broken water fountain will be replaced, pending a proposal from the company and final pricing. There is also an effort underway to determine if any of the underutilized spaces in the parish (particularly in Carwithen House) could be made available for rent. This will continue to be investigated with the help of the Diocese.

The meeting concluded with plans to meet for in-depth discussions during November and early December regarding the 2018 budget planning and vision setting. The strategic planning process will also continue and will be integrated into the Vestry discussions about upcoming budget decisions.



Needlepoint and Poem

Jon Delmas Wood

A tawny trodden dragon needlepoint
Forever cushions their descending dance
Whose motion comes to rest along the lance
That Michael hefts where timely bells appoint
And residues of works and days anoint
Within the devoted inheritance
Of kneeling generations who advance
The grace of weight upon that meeting point.



St. Paul's Angel Chapel, Kneeler

And tilled red clay awaits beyond the porch
Where weary limbs imprint its ochre dust
To simple fabric rendered tapestry
Of labor wrested from the blazing scorch
To cool beneath the beam of heaven thrust
Through eyes that weave redeeming mystery.

DECEMBER ON K STREET

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS AT ST. PAUL'S PARISH

4	Jean Groves Debra Loucks	27	The Rev. Dr. J. Peter Pham Jessica Simpson
8	Devon Hill David Schnorrenberg John Murton	28	Michael Fili Lesley Cross
11	Helen Zughaib	29	Gabriel Benn
13	Douglas Purvance	30	Nathan Williamson
15	Sarah Zygmunt	31	Anne Catherine Sloss Virginia Eikel
21	Beverly Dame Robert Menzer David Webber		
23	Bibi Persaud		
25	Lucky Ajueyitsi		

HaPpY
BiRtHdAY

Pixabay Free Images (<https://pixabay.com/en/happy-birthday-text-happy-birthday-967160/>)

Bread for the Journey in Advent

Music in a New Oxford Movement: Consonance, Dissonance and ...Resolution ?

Presented by Jeffrey Smith, Director of Music

The Pioneers

6 December, 7 to 8 pm

"False-relations" within Anglican musical tradition

"The Bart", Pimlico riots and St Michael's College Tenbury
A 'radical tradition' established at Saint Mark's College Chelsea

Party badges, Part I: Does a choir usurp or ennoble?

The Second Generation

13 December, 7 to 8 pm

Party Badges, Part II: Uncomfortable fence-sitting

From Thomas Hardy to S.S. Wesley; Parish v. Cathedral Music
Miss Maria Hackett, the 'Choristers' Friend'
The New Gothick: architectural revision for liturgy and its aftermath

Ancient and Modern

20 December, 7 to 8 pm

Protestant and/or Catholic: What exactly is our 'Solemn High Mass'?

A gazetteer of music within today's ECUSA

Party animals: Today's Helmore and Jebb
Resolution or Permanent Suspension?



SPECIAL SERVICES

The First Sunday of Advent Sunday, December 3, 2017

7:30 a.m.: Morning Prayer

7:45 a.m.: Low Mass

9:00 a.m.: Sung Mass

11:15 a.m.: Solemn Mass

6:00 p.m.: Advent Procession with
Lessons & Carols, followed by Bene-
diction of the Blessed Sacrament

The Immaculate Conception Friday, December 8, 2017

6:45 a.m.: Morning Prayer

7:00 a.m.: Low Mass

5:45 p.m.: Evening Prayer

6:45 p.m.: Solemn Mass

The Second Sunday of Advent Sunday, December 10, 2017

7:30 a.m.: Morning Prayer

7:45 a.m.: Low Mass

9:00 a.m.: Sung Mass

11:15 a.m.: Solemn Mass

6:00 p.m.: Advent Procession with
Lessons & Carols, followed by Bene-
diction of the Blessed Sacrament

The Fourth Sunday of Advent Sunday, December 24, 2017

9:45 a.m.: Morning Prayer

10:30 a.m.: Sung Mass

Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24, 2017

4:30 p.m.: Sung Mass

11:00 p.m.: Procession, Blessing of the
Crèche, & Solemn Mass

The Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Day

Monday, December 25, 2017

9:45 a.m.: Morning Prayer

10:30 a.m.: Procession & Solemn
Mass

New Years Eve

Sunday, December 31, 2017

7:30 a.m.: Morning Prayer

7:45 a.m.: Low Mass

9:00 a.m.: Sung Mass

11:15 a.m.: Solemn Mass

6:00 p.m.: Evensong & Benediction of
the Blessed Sacrament



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Remember to mark your Calendar:

December 3 and 10: 6 pm Advent Lessons & Carols

December 8, Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 6:45 pm

**December 24, Christmas Eve: 4:30 pm Sung Mass and
11 pm Procession, Blessing of the Crèche and Solemn Mass**



Fra Filippo Lippi c. 1459