

Epistle

November 21, 2006

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH & DAY SCHOOL

Save the Dates

December 1

Friday Guild Holiday Bazaar and Luncheon.

Reservations required.
Call Deb Schneider for reservations.

December 3rd

Progressive Dinner

RSVP to the Church Office or by signing up on the bulletin board at the south entrance.

December 10th

Lessons & Carols
10:30 worship service.

December 16

Kid's Day 10-2
Elementary Age kids to Bishop Spencer place for caroling 2-3.

January 7th

Baptism Sunday

The Next Healing Service will be December 12th, during the 10:30 Eucharist

**The next Epistle will be mailed Dec. 6th
Deadline Dec. 5th.**

Rector's notes: Last evening, I watched as a flock of crows (technically a "murder" of crows, but that seems rather extreme) circled the Plaza. I must have watched for ten minutes as thousands of crows circled and swooped all over the sky above the Plaza. What little I know about behavioral biology suggests there must be some advantage to the crows' survival to gather like this in the colder months. In contrast, we humans seem to think we can survive on our own, rugged individuals. My experiences following Katrina convinced me how flawed a theory this really is. We, like the crows, are created to be social, not just for the fun of it, but also for our very survival. During this stewardship time of year, I hope you consider not only the financial component of your parish involvement, but also your active participation in the life of the parish. "Flocking" together is how we create relationship, community, and cohesion (though sometimes we may feel like "murder"-ing together). It is a way we explore who we are and what we are called to do/to be as the Body of Christ. It is a way for us to enjoy the fellowship of our diverse community of parishioners and apprehend the mystery of God's presence among us.

Advent begins in just a few days, a new year for us to consider the story of our faith and the story of our God. I am very aware that this is a busy time of year and that there will be many competing demands upon our time. As you make your plans and fill out your calendar with commitments and obligations, I ask you to remember the focal point of this season for us—it is a time of anticipation and preparation for the celebration of the Incarnation of God in our midst. Please allow sufficient time for worship, prayer, and reflection upon this deep memory that is at the core of all that this time of year means to us as faithful persons. As is true in almost everything of depth and meaning, we reap as we sow.

Recently our Bishop called to inquire how things were going for my family and me. Truthfully, I confessed to him this transition has not gone as smoothly as I had hoped. Finding "THE house" which jumps out at us and says, "I am your new home", seems to be a never-ending quest right now. Changing positions after 16+ years in the same institution and as a manager is a real adventure for Guytie. Moving into a new school for her senior year after a lifetime in the same town and going to school "forever" with the same people has not been without anguish for Sarah. Erin has found it difficult finding a niche that works for her. All this said, without exception, each of us is thankful we are in Kansas City and at St. Paul's. We are thankful to be in a place that is open to the richly diverse quality of the human experience. We are thankful to be in a community that is seeking to discern God's will and purpose, individually and corporately. We are thankful to be in a community that wants to be a beacon of faith where it is—where God has graced it to be. "Truthfully," I told the Bishop, "if I were not having so much fun being the rector of St. Paul's, I am not sure I could do this". Everyday, I give thanks I have been called to serve as your rector. It is my privilege to be here. It is my joy to know I am where God intends me to be. Despite all the unexpected and expected aggravations of this move, I (and we) am thankful to be a part of the parish family of St. Paul's Westport/KCMO. I hope you too have things to be thankful for during this season of Thanksgiving. rsr+

Worship and Liturgy

A Collect from the St. Paul's EfM Group

**O God our Creator, Who blessed us to live in community, fellowship, and love,
Help us to discern where fairness and justice exist,
And to support those in our community who exemplify your teaching.**

Christmas Altar

A special way to remember a loved one this holiday season is to contribute to St. Paul's Christmas Altar. St. Paul's Altar Guild provides lovely decorations for Christmas. Please call Susan Williams at 913-341-6801.

Lessons and Carols

December 10th during the 10:30 Eucharist

The Festival of Lessons and Carols is a format of Christian worship service celebrating the birth of Jesus and traditionally followed at Christmas. The format is based on an order drawn up by E. W. Benson, later Archbishop of Canterbury, for Christmas Eve in 1880. Wherever the service is heard and however it is adapted, the strength of the service derives from the lessons and not the music. The main theme is the loving purposes of God, seen through the windows and words of the Bible.

We invite you to attend this special service to share in the beginnings of the Advent season as we prepare our hearts for renewal through the birth of the Christ Child.

The next date for baptism will be December 7th at the 10:30 a.m. service. If you are interested in having a baptism on that day please contact the Rector to schedule an appointment.

**The Next Healing Service
will be December 12th,
during the 10:30 Eucharist**

EDUCATION AND FORMATION FOR ALL

Adult Forum Schedule

9:15-10:15

Coffee and Fellowship before the adult forum series.

On December 3, 10, and 17, the Adult Forum presents a series broadly titled “Defrocking St. Nick: Balancing Spiritual and Secular Dimensions of Advent and Christmas.”

No disrespect to Nicholas intended — part one of the title is intentionally playful. The second part is more serious and identifies a past and present tension many experience during Christmas season. Our first session looks at insights from a variety of related sources which may help express balance. These sources include the theological principle of *via media*, winter solstice observances, shamanic practices, the life of Nicholas of Myra, and C. Clement Moore’s famous poem. Session two delves into moods and experiences of Christmas time, from the (sometimes) frenetic excitement of children to genuine depression among adults. What is it about this particular time of year which elicits such a spectrum of responses over a relatively short period of time? Session three touches on media Christmas specials (e.g., *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas*, *It’s A Wonderful Life*, *Dicken’s Christmas Carol*— how many can you list off hand?) Are there specials you are fond of or really dislike? Why? Please come and join in the presentations. Bill McNerny presenting.

Children and Youth

Gathering Time 9:10

Children are invited to gather together to share in a short devotion and conversation before joining their Sunday School Classes at 9:30. We will meet in the Godly Play room on the third floor.

Grades Prek-5th Grade

Children’s Choir practice 9:00-9:30

Children’s Choir

We have had several children join us this fall, and we have been delighted to welcome them. If you know of other children who would like to join us, we begin at 9:00 a.m. on the third floor music room (across the hall from the Sunday school rooms). We always start with donuts. Those children who are still “pre-readers” are picking up words and tunes quickly from the older children. We are beginning to learn advent and Christmas music, so come join us! Contact Bruce Sorrell at kcchamberorchestra@sbcglobal.net if you have questions.

Sunday School 9:30 a.m. - 10:20 a.m. - Third Floor

Youth meet each Sunday in the Youth Room. Grades 6-12

Join us for study and discussion focused around the Gospel reading for the day.

Children 3yrs to Kindergarten participate in Godly Play.

Grades 1-5 study scripture, traditions, and mission using the Lectionary based

Episcopal Curriculum *Living the Good News*.

Children, Youth and Family Events

√ ALL FAMILY SKATING PARTY

WHEN: December 2nd from 7:30-10:00 pm

WHERE: Skate World on the NW side of I-35 and Shawnee
Mission Parkway.

COST: \$6.75

WHO: Kids in grades 3-12 and all families and individuals
interested in joining us. RSVP Please to the church.

**The Rector’s First Sunday Visitor’s Class-Exploring a Lived Faith December 3rd
in the Westport Room 9:15-10:15.**

If you know of a member that is ill or in the hospital please call the church office or Arline Taylor so that we can deliver the altar flowers to them after the Sunday services.

When to call your rector....

Ø When someone in your family is dying. Call the office as soon as possible. I want to be available to you and your loved one. Don't worry about waking me up. I want to be on hand and available to you in the midst of your grief, not just after the fact. (rector's home phone 816.561.7741)

Ø When someone in your family is seriously ill. Call the office (816.931.2850). I will see them in the hospital as soon as possible.

Ø When someone in your family is going to have surgery. Call in advance. I can arrange for communion in the hospital before surgery or during the recovery period. Healing prayers can be offered with those awaiting surgery.

Ø When you or someone in your family is having a crisis of faith. Call to make an appointment for a visit. The people of St. Paul's are the top priority and I will see you just as soon as I can.

Ø When someone is planning a wedding. If you intend for the wedding to be celebrated at St. Paul's, call the rector soon after **the** question is popped so we can discuss the requirements of the church and set dates.

Ø When someone in your family loses a job, loses a friend to death, or is suffering from chemical dependency or depression.

Ø When a child is born, it is great to get a call even before the birth. I would like the opportunity to make a visit to bless both parents, new born, and the family.

Ø When you just need to talk to the rector. Call and we will find a good time and a good place just to visit.

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St. Paul's Episcopal Church & Day School
11 East 40th Street Kansas City, Missouri 64111
CHURCH: 816-931-2850 SCHOOL 816-931-8614
ON THE WEB: www.stpauls-kcmo.org

PARISH LIFE

"None of what happens at St. Paul's happens in a vacuum. We are a dynamic and energizing swirl of committed persons." R. Stan Runnels-Rector

The Annual Giant Cookie Ingathering

Our Gift Wrap and Cookie Ingathering for shut-in members will be at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, December 19, in the Garden Room. Please bring 5 to 6 dozen cookies (no nuts, please) to share with our homebound members. Even if you can't bring cookies, please join us for fellowship and fun. Bring a salad and stay for lunch. Questions? Contact Charlotte Gibson at 816-561-7962 or Nancy Hawley at 913-383-1662.

2006 PLEDGE DEADLINE. All pledges and other donations must be in the church office by December 31 to be counted on your 2006 tax return. If you are mailing a pledge payment or donation, please remember that the envelope must be **postmarked** by December 31, 2006.

Day School admission deadline Dec. 1

The Day School is now accepting applications for admission for the 2007-2008 school year. Parish members in good standing and sibling families are given priority as long as their applications are submitted by December 1. After that date, all applications are part of the general application pool. For more information, please contact admissions director Mary Dobbins at the Day School, 816-931-8614.

Bridge Anyone?

Are you and/or a friend interested in playing bridge during the daytime on a regular basis? This is NOT serious, Grand Master Bridge. It IS a fun, social event. Please call Kent McCall at 816-756-0854 for additional information.

December 2 - All Family Roller Skating Party

7:30 - 10 p.m. at Skate World on the NW side of I-35 and Shawnee Mission Parkway. The cost is \$6.75 per person. This is an activity for kids in grades 3-12 and all families and individuals interested in joining us. RSVP Please to the church.

December 3 - 5:30 p.m. Progressive Dinner. Dinner is \$15 a person. RSVP to the Church office or sign up on the bulletin board at the south entrance. The dinner will be at the homes of the Gerwicks, Watts, and Hodges. Details and maps will be handed out prior to the dinner. No child care will be available at the church for this off-site event do to insurance/liability guidelines

Starbucks Coffee and St. Paul's Combine Outreach Efforts

This Christmas season, two local Starbucks Coffee stores will donate the toys and books they receive for the needy to our food pantry. Any items we receive from Starbucks beyond our need will be donated to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Kansas City, Kansas.

Did you know Starbucks seeks to improve the economic and environmental conditions of the communities they serve? Their efforts include:

- Paying farmers fair prices for their coffee and offering favorable terms such as long term contracts and dealing directly with farmers
- Collaborating with a number of farms on social projects to improve the quality of life of farmers, their families, and community members such as schools or health clinics
- Supporting a number of loan programs that will help provide affordable credit to coffee farmers
- Supporting educational programs in China through a commitment to the Starbucks China Education Foundation
- Promoting conservation in coffee growing countries and utilizing cups in their stores which are 10% post consumer product

OUTREACH

Lived Faith Opportunities for All to join in

Every Sunday is Food Pantry Sunday at St. Paul's
Pantry and Meals On Wheels need brown paper bags and plastic bags.

Diapers* & Dollars

A project of the Spouses of the Clergy of the Diocese of West Missouri

Mothers in Haiti usually have limited access to diapers, perhaps only one or two converted rags or towels used as diapers. The Clergy Spouses are seeking to get donations of **cloth diapers** and dollars (to pay for shipping & special vaccination clinics) to be given to the mothers at Maison de Naissance in Haiti (the Episcopal birthing hospital).

I am asking you to join me in this special project of our Diocesan Clergy Spouses. I am hoping to collect at least 100 dozen diapers here at St. Paul's. Bring the diapers to the office any day of the week or bring the diapers to church on Sunday. You will see a large container to place the diapers and pin in. I will make sure they get delivered to the new mothers in Haiti.

Thanks, Guytie Runnels

*Diaper pins are needed too

Haiti

by Dr. Herb Davis

In Haiti the family unit is very devoted and supportive of each member. Living on a very meager income and happy and thankful for what little they have, the average Haitian family income for a year is \$150 to \$250 American dollars.

Each member of the family, including the children, have special duties to perform. Les Cayes, the vicinity where our mission Ravine a L'anse is located, in an agricultural area. The ground is tilled by the use of a heavy metal hand hoe. The older children, men and women perform this duty. Their main crops are rice, corn, bush beans and sweet potatoes. Native supplies include bananas, oranges, papaya etc.

Water, an essential, is brought each day from the river or a community well, carried in containers on top of their heads, walking anywhere from a half mile to two miles back to their home. This is especially a duty for the children. Everything is transported on their heads. Their stature is very straight, and the contents balance well on their head. I saw a woman carrying eight dozen eggs in a container on top of her head; baskets with six or seven chickens are carried the same way. An amazing event to me was seeing a group of men unloading a truck of cement bags, placing the 70 pound bags on top of their heads and carrying them to the storage room.

Pantry Ingathering. A **BIG** thank you to all the students at St. Paul's Day School who collected **9,850 items** for our Pantry, and to the Middle School students who helped box and carry the items to the church last week.

Christmas Outreach Projects for our Pantry

Adults: Warm socks, t-shirts and underwear for our Pantry community. Sizes M to XL. Mens and womens.
Children: Socks, mittens, hats-girls and boys-all sizes.

The United Way number for a pledge or a donation made to St. Paul's food pantry is #1586825. Should you wish to designate a portion of your United Way pledge to the pantry, simply include what percentage of the pledge you wish to donate and list the number above.

Schedule of Services and Events for December 2006

Services

First Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 2

5:00 p.m. - Holy Eucharist - Rite II

December 3, 2006

8:00 a.m. - Holy Eucharist - Rite I

10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist - Rite II

Second Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 9

5:00 p.m. - Holy Eucharist - Rite II

December 10, 2006

8:00 a.m. - Holy Eucharist - Rite I

10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist - Rite II

Lesson and Carols Service

Third Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 16

5:00 p.m. - Rite II

Holy Eucharist December 17, 2006

8:00 a.m. - Holy Eucharist - Rite I

10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist - Rite II

Fourth Sunday of Advent

NO SATURDAY SERVICE

December 24, 2006

10:00 a.m. **ONE SERVICE** - Morning Prayer

4:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist - Rite II Children's Pageant

10:00 p.m. Carols and Holy Eucharist - Rite II

Christmas Day December 25, 2006

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist - Rite II (no music)

First Sunday After Christmas

Saturday, December 30, 2006

5:00 p.m. - Holy Eucharist - Rite II

December 31, 2006

10:00 a.m. **ONE SERVICE** - Holy Eucharist - Rite II

Adult Forum and Adult Events

“Defrocking St. Nick: Balancing Spiritual and Secular Dimensions of Advent and Christmas.” On December 3, 10, and 17, the Adult Forum presents a series that begins with a playful spirit but is also serious and identifies a past and present tension many experience during the Christmas season.

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December 9 - Serving Breakfast at St. Paul's KCK - 9-11 a.m.

December 16 - Kids Day Out - 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Parish Hall. Advanced registration required. Visiting Bishop Spencer Place 2-3 p.m.

December 16 - Christmas Caroling on the Plaza - 6 p.m. in front of Barnes and Noble.

December 19 - 6 - 10 p.m. St. Paul's Youth wrapping books at Barnes and Noble for Outreach ministry.

December 22 - 1-6 p.m. St. Paul's Adults wrapping book at Barnes and Noble to benefit our Food Pantry.

January 6th, 2007 A FESTIVAL OF EPIPHANY
Three Magi will be crowned and will lead participants in activities throughout the church. This will include food, crafts, outreach projects, and special prayers and worship service.

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MEET WHITNEY GEE!

By Ruth Shipley

Whitney Gee is devoting her time – both professional and personal - to bettering our community.

She began working as the Director of Community Investment for the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation 3 ½ years ago immediately after graduating from college. The Foundation works to improve the quality of life in Kansas City by increasing charitable giving – by connecting donors to the needs they are particularly concerned with – and by providing leadership on critical community issues. Whitney works, for example, with the Board of the Jacob L. and Ella C. Loose Foundation which supports organizations serving needy children and families in Kansas City, Missouri. Whitney enjoys working with non-profit agencies and learning about philanthropic activity in Kansas City.

Whitney graduated from Williams College, a small liberal arts college located in Williamstown, Massachusetts, the same college her father, Gordon Gee, attended and where her younger sister, Hilary Gee, is currently studying. (Her brother Cameron attends Trinity College in San Antonio.) She graduated with a major in French and a concentration in Leadership Studies. She spent her junior year studying at the Sorbonne in Paris. “It was interesting going from one of the best schools in the U.S. to one of the best in Paris,” Whitney said. “In the U.S. there were 10-12 students in a class. In Paris, there was a lecture hall with 400 people,” Whitney explained. But even after living in Paris, a city she loves, and Williamstown, Massachusetts, Whitney knew she wanted to come back to Kansas City and be involved in the community here.

And she certainly is involved. When asked what her hobbies are, Whitney responded that she volunteers for a number of organizations. For example, she is an Ambassador for the Performing Arts Center; she helps to create interest in the community for the Center. She is on a committee for the DeLaSalle Education Center located at 37th and Forest. DeLaSalle is an alternative school for kids who cannot succeed in public school. She helps to raise money for the Belles of the American Royal. This organization has existed for fifty-five years, Whitney said. “It’s a great way to meet women of all ages and men too,” she said. Whitney met her boyfriend at her ball – he was an escort. “You spend six weeks learning a 10 minute waltz you perform for everyone,” she explained. Women of all generations help to put on a ball and participate in other fundraising activities as well. Whitney is also the Regional Alumni President for Williams College. She is in charge of fundraising for her class.

Whitney says she got her spirit for community involvement from her father’s example and from attending St. Paul’s Episcopal Day School. A cradle Episcopalian, (her parents married at St. Paul’s) Whitney attended St. Paul’s from preschool through eighth grade. “You really get that from St. Paul’s,” she said. “You’re here, and because you’re here you need to help,” Whitney explained. “There are close to 1,000 nonprofits in Kansas City – so much potential to do good things,” she said.