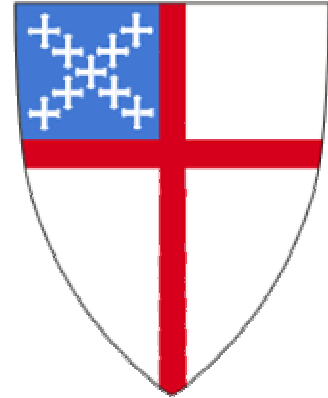


The *Epistle*

*St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Hopkinton, MA*



Volume 6, Number 5

A Message from our Fr. Mike

***St. Paul's
Episcopal Church***

61 Wood Street
P.O. Box 165
Hopkinton, MA 01748

Tel: 508-435-4536
Fax: 508-544-8205

Office E-mail:
stpaulhopkinton1@netzero.com

On the web:
www.stpaulhopkinton.org

Worship

Holy Eucharist – Rite II
Sunday, 10:30 AM

coffee and hospitality
9:45 AM

Published:
January 4th, 2007

Looking Back and Looking Forward

The new year is here, and we all have to learn to write 2007 on our checks and letters and even the Sunday service bulletins. It is time to assess what we did in 2006 and to look forward to what we need to do in 2007.

2006 was a year of healing and rebuilding for Saint Paul's. At last years' Annual Parish Meeting we spent some time telling the truth about painful events in the parish's past. We also embraced some hope based on a successful stewardship campaign and the willingness of our bishop to invest in our future. An additional sign of our bishop's support came in mid winter in the form of a tri-parish effort, under the guidance of an Alban Institute consultant, to explore our options as a small parish in today's world. As this work was going on, the vestry also undertook the task of forming a new vision for St. Paul's based on a new and honest assessment of Saint Paul's strengths as a parish. An early mark of returning health came in the spring--Easter morning saw the best attendance (to that date) at any service at St. Paul's since 2004. As summer came we said goodbye to some long term friends of the parish as we buried Tom Moorman (former Senior Warden Janet Moorman's husband) and Dorothea Desilets (Dave Desilets' mother). When the services were over, we immediately launched into a spruce up of the parish hall, kitchen and Sunday School rooms with a new coat of paint. At summer's end the parish entered into the 21st century by upgrading its communication

(Continued on page 5)

Mission *The mission of St. Paul's is to minister unconditionally to all in the name of Christ through shared worship, teaching, healing and service.*

Vision *St. Paul's is called to be an embracing, nourishing and life-giving family in Christ. We are called to care for each other, for our community and for the world.*

In this Issue

Worship	2
Sunday Worship	2
Second Sunday Offerings	2
Prayer Group	2
Prayer Website.....	2
Adult Bible Study	3
Flowers on the Altar.....	3
Electronic Devotionals.....	3
Upcoming Events	3
Epiphany Pageant – January 14 th	3
Annual Parish Meeting – January 21 st	3
Word of advice.....	4
Nativity Display News	4
Membership Class	4
A New Year wish	4
Stewardship News	4
Death requested	5
Note from Fr. Mike (<i>cont. from pg. 1</i>)	5
Epiphany Pageant.....	6
A Message from your Sr. Warden	6
Altar Guild	7
Choir	7
Hospitality	7
Outreach	7
Project Just Because.....	7
Helping St. Paul’s Church	7
Your Vestry	7
Epistle/Communications	8
Just for kid	9
Calendars.....	10

What God can do with nothing

Martin Luther said, “Since it is God’s nature to make something out of nothing, we must become nothing before God can make something out of us.”



Adelaide A. Pollard, a 20th-century poet, made the same point in the hymn “Have Thine Own Way”:

Have thine own way,
Lord! Have thine own way!
Thou art the potter, I am the clay.
Mold me and make me after thy will,
While I am waiting, yielded and still.

Worship

*Father, may we each be open to whatever surprise or guidance you have for us today.
Thank you.*

Sunday Worship

The Sunday worship schedule is centered on the Holy Eucharist, Rite II at 10:30AM. This service is celebrated for the first three Sundays of the month. On the fourth Sunday of each month, we nod to our more traditional members, and celebrate the Elizabethan language of the Holy Eucharist Rite I service.

All of our services will feature traditional and contemporary music and enjoy the support of our organist and choir.

Second Sunday Offerings

Each month, on the second Sunday of the month, we collect various food (and non-food) items for the Hopkinton Council on Aging Food Pantry. While specific needs are often announced during announcements in preceding Sunday services, you are always welcome to bring additional items - your gifts are always needed by those in our community.

Prayer Group

Lori Robak and Sue Ramsley are leading prayer group that meets on Thursdays at 11AM in Fr. Mike’s office. Please join them any Thursday for the entire hour, or just to stop in to request prayer together for a specific concern. All are welcome to join this informal prayer time and are welcome to pray silently or aloud.

If you have a prayer request, please call Sue at 508-881-5361 or Lori at 508-435-3353.

Prayer Website

Please remember to visit the prayer website:

<http://stpaulhopkinton.org/prayer/>

In addition to prayer requests, the website features special prayers, book summaries and recommendations, and links to other websites of interest. There is a special prayer request form on the website for people wishing to add their prayer requests to the site.

Adult Bible Study

The Bible Study group meets Sunday evenings, 5-6:30pm (coincident with the J2A group). For more information, call Amy Kent at 508-435-0221 or email her at aandjkentfamily@comcast.net.

The group is currently studying the Book of Acts.

Flowers on the Altar

Flower offerings may be made at any time of the year to the Glory of God, in thanksgiving for a specific blessing or in memory of a loved one. The flowers or plants enhance the chancel and remind our parishioners of a specific blessing or memorial. After the services the flowers/plants can be taken home by the donor or can be delivered to sick/shut-in parishioners.

If you'd like to dedicate flowers on the altar, please Contact Ruth Warner at (508)435-6349 or the church office (508)435-4536.

Electronic Devotionals

There are many good devotional websites available these days. For instance, browse to:

<http://www.crosswalk.com/faith/devotionals/>

There you will find a number of links to other devotional sites. These include devotionals for women, couples and people who want an easy way to read through the Bible in a year.

If you are interested in receiving a particular devotional, just goes to the website and click on a choice for the day. You can also sign up for weekly newsletters, etc.



Upcoming Events

An events calendar is also provided at the end of this newsletter.

JANUARY

Book Club – January 8th

This month the book club is reading *God and the New Physics* by Paul Davies. The club meets at the church on the second Monday of each month, this month on January 8th from 7:30 – 9(ish) PM. All adults are invited.

Epiphany Pageant – January 14th

The Sunday School classes will be putting on the Epiphany Pageant – See the note on [page 5](#) for more details.

Annual Parish Meeting – January 21st

The St. Paul's annual meeting will be held on Sunday, January 21st directly after the 10:00AM service. The meeting will also feature a Pot Luck brunch (bring your finest!) – there will be a signup sheet in the parish hall on the 7th and 14th. There will also be activities for the children. Your comments, feedback and opinions are important, especially as we embark on our new calendar year – please plan to attend.

FEBRUARY

Bishop Shaw visit – February 3rd

Bishop Shaw will be making his semi-annual visitation to St. Paul's on Saturday, February 3rd at 10AM. The visit will begin with a service, followed by a catered reception for him in the parish hall, capped off with a meeting with the vestry. All are welcome to come and voice their ideas and opinions to the Bishop.

MARCH

Women's Retreat – March 9-11

If you would like a weekend filled with the spirit, plus prayer, meditation, relaxation, great food, friendship, lots of fun and long walks, please join us for the annual Women's

Retreat held at the Barbara C. Harris Conference Center (on the web at www.bchcenter.org) in Greenfield NH. The cost is \$180 and that includes a shared lodge for two nights with six meals and includes Jan's fee (our leader). Please email Jane Desilets at janedesilets@netscape.net as soon as possible for further details - sign up needs to happen early to reserve space.

Word of advice

God gives us all a free trip around the sun each year. Enjoy the ride!

Nativity Display News

Thanks to the efforts of Kate Correia, Lori Robak, Ruth Warner and Dianne Belamarich, this year's nativity display was a huge success. Attendance was the best it's ever been and everyone had a good time, including those who worked at the event!

In conjunction with the display, a Gift Basket Sale was held, raising approximately \$350 from the sale of baskets crafted by Mary Arnault, Ruth Warner and Dianne Belamarich.

The vestry has approved donating the proceeds to Project Just Because – much needed by PJB during these winter months!

The interest and proceeds from the basket sale were so good that you can look forward to seeing the sale again next year, perhaps even as a separate event...

Membership Class

If you are an adult who has made St. Paul's your church home and are not yet officially a member of Saint Paul's or the Episcopal Church, talk to Fr, Mike about joining the Membership Class. This class will begin

meeting in November at a time, date and place to be announced. Sign up and begin the discussion about the details of where and when the class will meet. Topics covered will include the history of our tradition, current challenges to the church, and why membership is important.

There is a list of current members of St. Paul's in the hallway outside Fr. Mike's office. Likely, you made the list if you were baptized in the Church, or officially transferred your membership from a prior parish). See Fr. Mike or ask the church office to be sure.

A New Year wish

May the New Year bring us:

Enough happiness to keep us sweet;
Enough trials to keep us strong;
Enough hope to keep us lively;
Enough sorrows to keep us dependent upon God;
Enough failure to keep us humble;
Enough success to keep us eager;
Enough friends to give us comfort;
Enough wealth to meet our needs;
Enough enthusiasm to keep us looking forward;
Enough faith to overcome despair;
And enough determination to use every day and situation somehow for good.

Stewardship News

John and I would like to thank everyone in the parish who helped make the stewardship drive go smoothly and result in what we hope will be a reasonable financial footing for Saint Paul's in 2007.

While we are following up with pledge information from the last few families, we are pleased to say that the stewardship campaign resulted in five new pledging families and twelve increased pledges from existing members who pledged last year. We believe that's the most new and increased pledging we've had in recent

memory and it demonstrates the spirit and energy of our family that is Saint Paul's.

Happy New Year to everyone and if you still wish to pledge and weren't contacted for any reason or if you have any questions please contact either Chris at 508-529-4733 or estey@verizon.net or John at 508-435-5015 or jdiercks@comcast.net.

Peace,
Chris and John
Stewardship co-chairs

Death requested

Thank you, Lord, for the New Year and all of the prospects it offers. I pretty well know what you wish for the world, but what do you have in mind for me?

All right, I get it. I need to stop making excuses. I'm good at it, am I not? I'm at least as good as Moses when he tried to get out of going to Egypt to lead his people to the Promised Land. I have dodged serving the homeless or teaching a class at the church. And yes, I have claimed I was too busy to really study the Bible or too old to work with the youth or too strapped to be more generous in my giving.

I could go on but you know full well that I'm in spiritual trouble. I need to get right with you.

To do so, I have to ask a favor. I want to ask you for death. No, not the death of me, but the death of my excuses. When I tell you I can't do what you want me to do, then give me a guilty conscience and make me restless until I repent and recant of my excuses. May all of my excuses perish permanently so that I am totally surrendered to you. In Christ's name. Amen.

—Charles Ferrell

Note from Fr. Mike *(cont. from pg. 1)*

capabilities. We reconnected the office to the internet and added the ability to use the parish hall for multimedia presentations. In the fall members of the vestry attended a Diocesan Resource Day, and participated in training events and work shops to expand their skills for parish leadership. In October the vision project came to its fruition. The new vision of St. Paul's as a healthy (and somewhat large) family-sized parish opened the door to imagining life in a collaborative ministry with Christ Church in Medway—a parish with very similar history, problems and hopes. In November we hosted a diocesan-wide Safe Church Training session, attended by eleven members of St. Paul's vestry and Christian Education Program. In November, the parish also began to explore the possibility of sharing space on Sunday mornings with Grace United Methodist Church. By year's end, and with the leadership of the vestry and input from the congregation at a very open and healthy parish meeting, the parish had come to the decision that such a sharing was possible and even desirable. At year's end we said goodbye to another long time member of the parish as we buried Joan Gimskie. Christmas Eve provided another mark of returning health and life, with the largest total attendance at services at St. Paul's (not counting the UMC service) since 2004. Other nice signs of life were the attendance figures for the third and fourth quarters of the year, which saw increased attendance over 2005. 2006 was a blessed year in the life of Saint Paul's!

2007 promises to be a year of "moving toward the light." Grace UMC will be moving "their tent" under our roof on January 14, 2007, and we will be adjusting our Sunday morning schedule to accommodate their presence. Coffee hour will be starting at 9:45 AM, Sunday School will start at 10:15 AM and Church will start at 10:30 AM for the foreseeable future. The rental income from Grace will help balance our budget, and make it possible for St. Paul's to revive the mission and outreach portion of our ministry. Thanks again to our bishop, we

will be working with a consultant as we begin to create a collaborative ministry with Christ Episcopal Church in Medway. The goal is to use 2007 to lay the foundation for shared clergy and administrative functions and costs in 2008 and beyond. To make the future collaborative ministry successful, 2007 will also be a year of rebuilding Saint Paul's lay leadership base. There are a number of training opportunities provided by the diocese, and we will be recruiting volunteers to attend training in areas that interest them to enhance their God given talents and to glorify God through the ministries of the parish. 2007 will also be a year of working on St. Paul's Safe Church policies and procedures, with the goal of bringing us into substantial compliance with the National Church's guidelines on providing our children and volunteers a safe environment for Sunday School, Youth activities, Children's Choirs and so forth.

2006 was a busy and blessed year for us, 2007 promises to be another, and 2008 and beyond offer the hope of a long and stable future for the ministry of Saint Paul's in Hopkinton and the surrounding area. It has been my great privilege to be part of this parish for this past year, and it is my joy to look forward the wonderful possibilities in our new year together.

Mike+

Epiphany Pageant

Our Epiphany Pageant is fast approaching! We are very fortunate to have Linda Lee running the pageant again this year. She has chosen a little different story for our children to participate in.

The schedule is as follows:

Rehearsal – Saturday, Jan. 6th
Rehearsal – Saturday, Jan. 13th
Pageant – Sunday, Jan. 14th

So far, we have just a couple of children signed up. This is a very exciting event for the kids, and in order to hold the pageant we need more children to sign up.

There are speaking roles, as well as non-speaking roles for children of all ages. Contact Linda Lee at hopklee@netscape.com if your child(ren) would like to participate. You just need to indicate if they would like a speaking role.

We have been very blessed at St. Paul's this past year, and we hope your children will share in our blessing by participating in a spectacular Epiphany Pageant.

Best regards,
Vicki Jacobson

A Message from your Sr. Warden

Happy New Year! I hope everyone's holiday season was joyful and peaceful. 2007 promises to be an exciting year as we build upon the positive energy and momentum that we experienced in 2006.

I would like to welcome Grace United Methodist Church to our home. I am thrilled that they have found a place where they can call home also. Endless opportunities for shared fellowship, Christian education and worship exist for both of our parishes.

In 2007, we will continue to work with Christ Church in Medway with the help and guidance of the diocese to develop a plan of collaborative ministries. The sky is the limit for what form these ministries can take. It can be working together with office and business tasks, property/maintenance items, or anything that we can think of that will benefit both parishes by forming a collaborative effort. More and more parishes are using collaborative clergy representation. For small family-size parishes like St. Paul's and Christ Church, this can be a significant budget saver. The parishes involved keep

their identity and a consistent clergy presence, but form a team to work together for the spiritual needs of the churches. As our work with Christ Church progresses, I invite your participation and pledge to keep open lines communication with you.

When Bishop Shaw visits us in early February, I'm sure he will be pleased and encouraged by the progress we have made since his last visit. It is because of your faith, hard work, dedication and generosity that we have turned our tough times around and are now growing and once again heading towards vitality.

Faithfully Yours,

Jay Jacobson
Senior Warden

Altar Guild

The Altar Guild is a Parish ministry that is responsible for keeping the Church ready for its Sunday worship. The guild needs 6 to 8 people to give one hour per month, at their convenience, to set up the altar for Sunday worship, clean up afterward, and arrange the flowers for the Altar (no experience needed!!!). Please consider giving this simple gift of time and contact Ruth Warner at whitehaller2@comcast.net.

Choir

The choir is also looking for people who enjoy singing or play an instrument. If you have an interest, you can contact Gretchen Carr or Carol Spengler for more information.

Hospitality

Coffee hour after Sunday's worship is hosted by the hospitality crew and supported by families and parishioners. Hosting a coffee hour amounts to bringing enough goodies for about 50-75 people (mostly little ones!) and setting up/tearing down the coffee during the service.

There's a signup sheet in the Parish hall.

Outreach

Project Just Because...

Please continue to remember St. Paul's community outreach program with **Project Just Because**.

.... Needs...

- Household items
- toiletries
- Clothes (adult and children) in good condition.
- Blankets
- New underwear and socks
- Kitchen accessories
- Towels and sheets
- Children's toys, games, and books.

You can also browse their website for additional needs:

www.projectjustbecause.org

Helping St. Paul's Church

We constantly strive to maximize our financial resources in order to accomplish our goal of doing God's work here on earth. One of the ways we do this is in affiliation with Amazon.com.

A link to the Amazon associates page is available at www.stpaulhopkinton.org. St. Paul's receives a percentage of the sale on all purchases on Amazon from this link.

Your Vestry

Jay Jacobson	Senior Warden
Ruth Warner	Junior Warden
Phil Robidoux	Treasurer
Dianne Belamarich	Clerk
David Spengler	(acting) Asst Treasurer
John Diercks	Stewardship
Chris Estey	Stewardship

Peter Dittman	Epistle/Website
Sue Ramsley	Spirituality
<vacant>	Outreach
Gretchen Carr	Hospitality

Vestry meets monthly, on the 1st Wednesday of the every month, beginning at 7PM in the Parish Hall. Next Vestry meetings: February 7th.

Copies of prior vestry meeting minutes may be found on the website. Browse to the following link for details on how to access the minutes:

<http://stpaulhopkinton.org/vestry.html>

As other minutes are posted, they will be announced via email.

Epistle/Communications

Epistle

The Epistle is distributed electronically (as a .pdf file) and is also available on the St. Paul's Website (www.stpaulhopkinton.org). If you would like to receive the Epistle electronically, please send email to Peter Dittman at pdittman@comcast.net.

Of course, we also welcome your opinion on any communications from the vestry/church.

Next Deadline for submission

If you have articles, suggestions and/or announcements for the next Epistle, should be submitted by January 27th, for publication February 1st.

Just for kid

Fancy Flakes

Make a snowflake as unique and as special as you are in God's eyes.

What you need:

- paper (plain white or glittery wrapping paper)
- round plate or saucer (about the size you want your snowflake)
- pencil, crayon or marker
- scissors
- glitter
- glue stick
- hole punch
- ribbon or yarn



What you need to do:

1. Draw a circle on a piece of paper by tracing around the plate or saucer.
2. Cut out the circle.
3. Fold the paper in half three times. (If the paper is thick, fold it just twice.)
4. Use your scissors to carefully cut out shapes from the folded paper.
5. Unfold your paper.
6. On one side, write some things that are special about you.
7. Decorate the other side using the glue stick and glitter.
8. When the glitter is dry, punch a hole in the snowflake.
9. Put ribbon or yarn through the hole, and tie it to make a hanger.



Just for KIDS

Unique Creations

It is the New Year and in many places it is cold enough to snow. God created snowflakes that are so unique that no two are alike! It is the same way with people – we are all one-of-a-kind. If God cares so much about how each snowflake is made, imagine how much God cares about you!

Directions: Draw lines to match the two halves of the snowflakes. Write the letters on the numbered blanks to form the words and to complete the verse.

1		pra	u	7		wonder	e
2		yo	fully	8		ma	ur
3		be	ise	9		yo	de
4		a	nd	10		wo	ful
5		fear	m	11		er	fully
6		a	cause	12		wonder	rks

"I _____ I _____
 1 2 3 4 5
 _____ ; _____
 6 7 8 9 10
 _____"

Psalm 139:14, NIV

Answer: "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful..."

Calendars

January 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 7:00 PM Vestry meeting	4 11:00 AM Prayer group	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 11:00 AM Prayer group	12	13
8:45 AM First Sunday Breakfast 9:45 AM Church School 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite 2 5:00 PM Adult Bible Study	7:30 PM Book Club					
14	15	16	17	18 11:00 AM Prayer group	19	20
10:15 AM Church School *10:30 AM* Holy Eucharist, Rite 2 Epiphany Pageant 5:00 PM Adult Bible Study	Martin Luther King Day					
21	22	23	24	25 11:00 AM Prayer group	26	27
10:15 AM Church School 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite 2 11:30 AM Parish Meeting 5:00 PM Adult Bible Study						
28	29	30	31			
10:15 AM Church School 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite 1 5:00 PM Adult Bible Study						

* - NOTE THE TIME CHANGE

February 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 11:00 AM Prayer group	2	3 10:00 AM Bishop Shaw visit
4	5	6	7 7:00 PM Vestry meeting	8 11:00 AM Prayer group	9	10
10:15 AM Church School 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite 2 5:00 PM Adult Bible Study						
11	12	13	14	15 11:00 AM Prayer group	16	17
10:15 AM Church School 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite 2 5:00 PM Adult Bible Study	7:30 PM Book Club					
18	19	20	21	22 11:00 AM Prayer group	23	24
10:15 AM Church School 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite 2 5:00 PM Adult Bible Study						
25	26	27	28			
10:15 AM Church School 10:30 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite 1 5:00 PM Adult Bible Study						