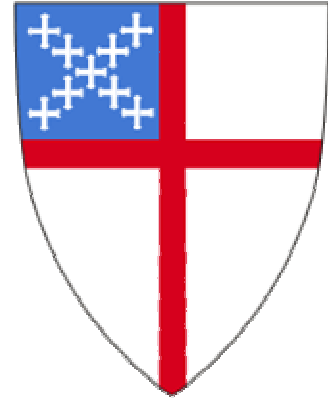


The *Epistle*

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



Volume 7, Number 3

A Message from our Fr. Mike

***St. Paul's
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Worship

Holy Eucharist – Rite II
Sunday, 10:30 AM

*coffee and hospitality
afterward*

*Published:
November 187th, 2007*

Time for a Miracle!

One of my favorite Bible stories is the one about the prophet Elijah, who during a time of scarcity asked a widow to bring him something to eat. She replied that she had only enough to feed her son and herself one more time before her resources were exhausted, and then her intention was to allow nature to take its course and starve. Elijah prevailed, and she did prepare him some food and "the meal and oil did not run out" until the time of scarcity had been replaced with a time of plenty. It was a miracle!

St. Paul's received notice this week that the Play House Preschool will not be renewing its contract to rent the undercroft in 2008. Their current contract runs through the end of June, which gives St. Paul's ample notice--time to weigh the financial impact and potential options. I think this might represent a "time of scarcity" in the life of the parish. A half year of rental represents something like \$13,000.00 of income that St. Paul's had planned on and was relying to meet the 2008 budget—a budget intended to grow the ministries of the parish through increased pledges and shared (read reduced) expenses and shared (read increased) ministry with Christ Church in Medway as the Hopkinton Medway Collaborative Ministry unfolds.

*The plan is likely to remain the same. Saint Paul's and Christ Church continue to need to lean on each other to share expenses
[\(cont. on page 4\)](#)*

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.*

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Holly

Holly is a popular decoration at Christmastime, not just for its beauty but also for its religious significance. Holly’s thorny leaves and red berries symbolize Jesus’ Passion and blood, reminding us of the fate awaiting the Christ child. According to old Christian legends, holly first sprang up under Christ’s footsteps, and his cross was made from the wood of holly.



Worship

Lord, we remember that your prophet Isaiah looked for the day when "the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord"

Prepare us to help make it happen.

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

Collaborative Ministry

The Hopkinton-Medway Collaborative Ministry (HMCM) continues to define itself and how it will operate to most effectively support the ministries of both St. Paul’s and Christ Church’s parishes. To read more of the HMCM, please browse to it’s website at:

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

Prayer Group

The Prayer group, led by Lori Robak and Sue Ramsley, meets regularly on Tuesdays at 9:45AM in Fr. Mike’s office. Please join them any Tuesday 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, praying silently or aloud.

If you have a prayer request, please call Sue at 508-881-5361 or Lori at 508-435-3353 or visit the prayer website at:

<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.

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 Dianne Belamarich at (508)397-9487 or the church office (508)435-4536.

Electronic Devotionals

There are many good devotional websites available these days. For instance, a number of devotional sites can be found at:

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

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 go to the website and click on a choice for the day. You can also sign up for weekly newsletters, etc.

Adult Bible Study

Held on Sunday evenings at 5:00pm, the group will be using a 12 week study guide entitled "David – Developing a Heart for God". If interested, please call or email Amy Kent at (508)435-0221 or aandjkentfamily@comcast.net

All are welcome!

Upcoming Events

November

Youth Group – November 30th

The HMCM invites youth to attend it's Youth Group, Friday, Nov. 30th from 7:00-9:00 at Christ Church Medway, grades 8 and above are welcome. Please bring along a paper good item for the Medway Food Pantry. For more information (including car pool details), please call Amy Kent (508) 435-0221 or aandjkentfamily@comcast.net.

December

Nativity Display – December 1st

St. Paul's will host its annual Nativity Display from 10:00-2:00 on Sat. Dec. 1st. Please plan to bring in your Nativity sets on Friday evening, the 30th, sometime after 6:00. We are also planning to have a bake sale and "white elephant" and holiday craft table. Volunteers are needed – please contact Ruth.

Annual Giving Tree – December 2nd

St. Nicholas will lead the children to the Altar as they return their Giving Tree gifts. Gifts will go to children from Project Just Because. Please remember, unwrapped presents only.

Pot Luck Brunch – December 9th

Please join us for fellowship and a brief respite from the Holiday busi-ness for a pot luck brunch following the service on Sunday December 9th. Please bring a main dish, salad or desert – and the oven is available to keep dishes warm during the service.

Stewardship

As you know, St. Paul's has experienced a new vibrancy and vitality in the short time that we've been blessed with Father Mike. This fall, Father Mike challenged the Vestry to set goals for 2008 that go beyond the basics of simply

paying our bills and that are truly inspired by our mission "to minister unconditionally to all in the name of Christ through shared worship, teaching, healing and service." The Vestry concluded that:

- We will minister to St. Paul's youth. We will do this by improving **Christian Education** programs for the children and youth of our parish. The proposed budget for 2008 calls for major increases in funding for programs for our children and youth, including much needed funding for the J2A program.
- We will minister to others through outreach. **Outreach** is a way in which we spread the Gospel - in service to others. We will increase St. Paul's outreach into the community in various ways, but especially through our continued support of Project Just Because and Serenity House.
- We will nurture and cultivate **shared worship**. We will continue to support the Hopkinton-Medway Collaborative Ministry (HMCM). This important collaboration is not only a tangible sign of our commitment to shared ministry, it is also an integral part of Fr. Mike's continued participation in our parish life.

To reach these goals, we will need help in the form of time and talent contributions and, of course, some of your earthly treasure as well. We thank you for your prayerful consideration of what you can contribute in time, talent and treasure.

A Challenge from the Mass. Diocese

The Diocese of Massachusetts has challenged the saints of Saint Paul's to increase our giving to support the life of the parish by increasing our Pledges for 2008 above our Pledges for 2007 and by end of the year gifts to support the 2008 ministries of the church.

Bishop Cederholm has offered a dollar for dollar match up to \$10,000.00 for **new pledges, increased pledges** and **special gifts** that are received in time to meet the December 15 application deadline. This offer has been made to Saint Paul's and also to Christ Church in Medway, in the hopes that it will stimulate growth in ministry in both parishes and help provide initial financial support for the budding Hopkinton-Medway Collaborative Ministry.

This means that this is the year to give serious thought and prayer to making a pledge or increasing your pledge to Saint Paul's, or to make an end of the year gift to the parish. Your action will have amplified impact on Saint Paul's finances and therefore its ministries for the coming year.

To help Saint Paul's achieve this goal (and make the deadline for applying for this matching grant), please have your pledge card or gift in by Sunday December 9.

Thank you very much for your contributions to the health, well-being and mission of St. Paul's.

Stephen Pelletier, Co-Chair of Stewardship
(774)364-0166 or srpelletier@yahoo.com

John Diercks, Co-Chair of Stewardship
(508)435-5015 or jdiercks@comcast.net



Advent

In an Advent speech in 2002, Pope John Paul II said, "The liturgy of Advent helps us to understand fully the value and meaning of the mystery of Christmas. It is not just about commemorating the historical event, which occurred some 2,000 years ago in a little village of Judea. Instead, it is necessary to understand that the whole of our life must be an 'advent,' a vigilant awaiting of the final coming of Christ. To predispose our mind to welcome the Lord who, as we say in the Creed, one day will come to judge the living

and the dead, we must learn to recognize him as present in the events of daily life. Therefore, Advent is, so to speak, an intense training that directs us decisively toward him who already came, who will come and who comes continuously."

Message from Fr. Mike (cont.)

and share ministry. But now the urgency to grow the pledge base of each parish is even greater.

You hold the key. As you pray over and think over your pledge for 2008, you will be deciding if "the meal and oil will not run out" at Saint Paul's until this time of scarcity has passed and the time of plenty has returned.

*Praying for a miracle,
Mike+*

Searching for Saints

God is on a saint search, and it's not only perfect people who are going to be found. Sure, there may be some who are born with the natural ability to love the Lord with the totality of heart, soul, mind and strength, nonstop. But for most of us, this passion and power come only after we discover that God has always loved us, and that his love precedes our own.

Fact is, most of us find the Lord only after we have been found by him.

And all God asks is that we respond with that same level of passion ... loving him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength ... and showing a willingness to love our neighbors as ourselves.

If we do, we'll be God's holy ones, set apart for his service.
—Homiletics

Rummage Sale

It is with great pleasure that we announce the success of this fall's Rummage Sale. The proceeds totaled just over \$2000.

A sincere **thank you!** to all who helped make this a very successful sale!

Unsinkable Serenity

E. Stanley Jones, the great missionary to India, told of a psychiatrist's account of a patient who had no inner serenity. The psychiatrist said he couldn't give her that gift but that perhaps Jones as a religious man might. Jones replied that he couldn't but he knew Someone who could.

Of course. Jones was referring to God through Christ. In his book *The Way to Power and Poise*, the evangelist wrote: "Now the crux of the whole matter is just here: Can we realize God within us in such a way that no matter what happens on the outside we will still be secure? If that can't happen, we're sunk. If it can happen, we're not only unsunk, but unsinkable."

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

In typical Episcopalian style, we celebrate and enjoy fellowship at Coffee hour following our Sunday worship.

Grace Church begins coffee for their hospitality hour following their service and we clean up the coffee after our hospitality hour. The two coffee 'hours' are separate, which means we are always in need of volunteers as hosts. Hosting a coffee hour means bringing and setting up the goodies before the 10:30 service, keeping the coffee pots filled as needed, and cleanup afterward.

A sign up sheet is available outside the Kitchen in the parish hall.

On the second Sunday of each month, we hold a **Pot Luck Lunch** after the service. Check the website calendar for details.

Outreach

Project Just Because...

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

You can browse to their website for their needs and for information on how you might help those in need in our community:

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
Sue Ramsley	Junior Warden
Phil Robidoux	Treasurer
Mary Arnaut	Asst Treasurer
Dianne Belamarich	Clerk
Ruth Warner	Property
John Diercks	Stewardship
Peter Dittman	Epistle/Website
Steve Pelletier	Stewardship
Gretchen Carr	Hospitality

The vestry meets monthly, at 7PM on the 1st Wednesday of the month, in the Parish Hall, with the next meetings scheduled for Wednesday, December 5th.

Copies of prior vestry meeting minutes may be found on the website. Browse to the link below 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

Once a month, typically mid-month, 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 epistle@stpaulhopkinton.org.

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

-Peter Dittman

Just for kids

PAPER BAG LUMINARIAS

Lead your family and friends to your house this holiday with luminarias celebrating Jesus' birth.

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Pencil
- Brown paper lunch bags
- Hole punch, tack or pushpin
- Sand
- Votive candles or tea lights

WHAT YOU DO:

- 1 Draw a simple picture, word or symbol of Jesus' birth on the bag; for example, a star, a manger, a heart, a lamb, a wise man or the word "JOY."
- 2 Using a hole punch or pushpin, punch holes along the drawing, leaving a little space between each hole. Punch all the way through both sides of the bag so you end up with the same design on both sides when the bag is opened. When using a pin, place a piece of cardboard under the bag or work on carpet so nothing gets damaged.
- 3 Open the bag and fill each luminaria with about two inches of sand. Then sink a votive candle or tea light in the center of the sand.
- 4 Place the luminarias along a walk, patio or porch. Have an adult light the candles.



The Son of the Highest

A new baby brings joy and the anticipation of what he or she will grow up to become. Jesus' birth was miraculous, but His life was prophesied and planned by God.

Unscramble the words below, matching them to their correct spelling. Then use the numbers to fill in the correct words to complete Luke 1:32-33 (NIV).

- | | |
|-----------|--------|
| 12. taerg | he |
| 8. eh | Jacob |
| 13. gHhi | father |
| 7. aDvid | give |
| 10. bocJa | great |
| 3. reafth | High |
| 4. vieg | David |

- | | |
|------------|---------|
| 2. noS | forever |
| 11. seouh | end |
| 5. northe | Son |
| 1. roevefr | house |
| 6. dingmok | throne |
| 9. den | kingdom |

"He will be _____₁₂ and will be called the _____₂
of the Most _____₁₃. The Lord God will _____₄
him the _____₅ of his _____₃ _____₇,
and _____₈ will reign over the _____₁₁
of _____₁₀ _____₁; his _____₆ will
never _____₉."

Luke 1:32-33, NIV

Answers: 1. forever 2. Son 3. father 4. give 5. throne 6. kingdom 7. David 8. he 9. end 10. Jacob 11. house 12. great 13. High