



St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
McHenry, IL



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## Weekly ePistle ~ November 18, 2020

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### *Worship services are suspended ... for now*

We have received a statement from Bishop Lee concerning the recent rise in Covid cases. Along with Governor Pritzker, he is recommending that we only go out for essential errands. Therefore, the vestry and wardens have decided to suspend our worship services for the time being. You may read his letter by clicking the link below. We'll resume services when it is deemed safer to do so.

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/From-Bishop-Lee--Suspending-In-Person-Worship-and-Meetings.html?soid=1107175454157&aid=dNULvRRozI8>

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### **Contact Information!**

With our changing times today, it is very important that we have current contact information for each member of our parish. We are currently using Constant Contact as our way to communicate last minute changes or any other timely news. In addition to making sure that we have your current email address, it is very important that you check your email regularly to make sure that you have the latest information.

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### ***From Deacon Deb***

Dear all,

As we were unable to be together last week, I thought I would share with you what I had prepared for a homily from Matthew 25:14-30. I believe the message continues to be relevant and speaks to where we now find ourselves.

“I knew that you were a harsh man...so I was afraid.”

Fear. What do we fear? In this parable Jesus teaches us how fear can impact our lives. The wealthy landowner leaves three of his servants in charge while he goes on a journey. To each he gives a sum of money to use as they wish for the purposes of maintaining his property. Two of the servants wisely use what they were given and double their investment. The one, who was afraid of the landowner, buries the money and suffers the consequences.

If we view ourselves as the servants and the landowner as God, we can talk about what this parable has to say about all that God has given and how we put our gifts to use. What motivates us to gain more for God or what prohibits us, holds us back from even trying? No doubt the world can be a dangerous place. Fear is a real and powerful emotion that can be quite useful in keeping us safe. Fear is beneficial when we use it as a tool for safety – it is problematic when it becomes a way of life. When we allow fear to inform our decisions and govern our actions, our life becomes no life at all. We become stuck – buried with and in our fear.

The unwise servant was overcome by fear and literally buried his gift along with any chance of seizing opportunity. He let his fear dominate his thinking and way of being. The two wise servants may have also been afraid of the landowner; we don't know. What we do know is they did not let their fear dominate their thoughts and actions. They were able to put fear in its place and by so doing were set free to envision possibility, enjoin creativity and reap the reward. If we allow fear govern any area of our lives how will we ever know what is possible?

Our God is not harsh. Our God is pure love; love that leaves no room for fear. I believe that God has wonderful plans for us. If the past few months have taught us anything it is that God has not lost faith in us. Let's not lose faith in God.

Let's set aside any fear, any doubt and live in the light and freedom of God's unfailing love – and then reap the reward.

Thanks be to God.

In Christ,  
Deacon Deborah

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### ***Words from Wardens***

The Vestry met this past Sunday via a Zoom call. I would like to share with you some of the important highlights of the meeting. We are all saddened by the news from the Bishop's office that we are to curtail in-person worship until mid-December. While coming together in friendship and prayer is what we all want, especially in these very troubled times, we have also learned that St. Paul's is a resilient group of faithful people who have “risen to the occasion” time and time again to bear witness to what God has taught us. *“For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” John 5:4*

At this time, we are working with Rev. Eileen Shanley-Roberts to come up with a plan to have some type of remote worship. We hope to have this in place very soon and will communicate that to everyone. If you have any suggestions as to how we can adapt during this temporary shutdown, please reach out to Deb, Jeff, or me.

Finally, we agreed that while we are not able to be together in person, we will not lose sight of our commitment to Outreach. We are reaching out to our partners, Food for Thought, First Way Pregnancy, and Kids in Need to discuss our outreach for Advent. Our Moses Basket Outreach has always been a treasured event at St. Paul's. Our Moses Baskets made the move with us to our new home, and we have every intention of continuing this ministry this year! We will keep you posted.

Our move is now behind us, and although we have faced many challenges that we did not anticipate, there is no question about where St. Paul's is going – we are moving forward and beginning that process of thriving! Thanks for taking the journey with me, and I am excited for this next phase in our life together at St. Paul's. To quote one of my favorite authors:

“Oh, the Places You'll Go!” *Dr. Seuss*

Beth Lukas, Senior Warden

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### ***2021 Vestry***

Here is the slate for Vestry for the upcoming year. They will be up for approval at our January Annual Meeting.

Senior Warden - Beth Lukas

Junior Warden - (*Vacant*)

Returning members - Kathy Biggerstaff, Rick Carlstedt, Judy Robel

New member - Heather Dodge

New member - Jeff Lynaugh

New member - Al Robel

Thank you, new members, for your commitment to St. Paul's!

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### ***St. Paul's Prayer List***

***Week of November 22 - November 28***

Please keep those on our prayer list in your thoughts during this time. If you wish to add to the list, please contact the church office.

**Ongoing prayers:** Yasmin, Kay, Edna, Amy, Tim, Jim, Marty, Barb, Marianne, Jim, Lucy, Vic, and Eleanor

**Current prayers:** Jenn, Stacy, Jeff, Keith, Bobbi, Rory, Bonnie, Brandy, Danielle, and Shirley-Patricia

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### ***Questions or concerns?***

Please contact our Wardens - Beth Lukas (Senior Warden)  
or Jeffrey Zabor (Junior Warden).

### ***In need of pastoral care?***

Please contact Deborah Lang, our Deacon: [DeaconDeb@stpaulmchenry.com](mailto:DeaconDeb@stpaulmchenry.com)

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## ***101 Reasons to be Episcopalian!***

**#9** *Anglicans do good deeds to increase understanding of God, not out of fear or to earn admission to heaven.*

*-- Robert L. Neal III, Diocese of Chicago*

**#43** *We welcome the faithful, the seeker, and the doubter.*

*-- Diana Smith, Diocese of Washington*

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