

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

The Epistle

January 2025 Issue



Greetings all and blessings for the festive season and a wonderful New Year!

As Karen and I mark five months in California we continue to experience a number of “firsts” but possibly one of the strangest for us will be our first California January.

In New Zealand Christmas and New Year are summer holidays. All schools and most businesses close down before Christmas and stay shut for at least a couple of weeks while their students and staff head off to beaches and barbeques and all the fun things that summer brings. So not surprisingly January is a very quiet month for most churches, blessedly so after the busy-ness of Christmas.

Here of course we will celebrate our first winter (although probably not white) Christmas and then immediately begin preparing for our respective first annual meetings with all that entails.

This yearly gathering of our church family can easily be seen, I know, as a mere formality where we go through the motions before carrying on with business as usual. I want to encourage us to resist that urge this year.

We are as a parish in a time of change. That’s inevitable when a new priest comes along, but there are other factors at play here also. As a church we are still finding a new normal in this post-pandemic world and many of our oldest and most faithful parishioners are taking a well-deserved step back from some of their labors. Our diocese will later in the year elect a new bishop, the first time undertaking this process in some decades, and the transition from Bishop David will pick up pace as the year goes by. In our nation we are entering what will surely be a time of change with many challenges along the way. All these will be things we as a whole church will have to face,

and we will need a strong and active vestry to lead us. Moreover, with both our Wardens stepping down we need people on our vestry capable of stepping into their sizable shoes. Our annual meeting is the time when we all, as a parish family, appoint these representatives and discuss where we've come from, where we are, and where we think we may be going. It is, in other words, a big deal.

Less than a week after our meeting and elections I will be meeting with the new vestry for a day to begin looking at the year ahead and beyond. As part of that gathering, we will make our required appointments of Wardens, etc, and we will discuss how we want to structure and manage ourselves in order to be as effective and expansive as possible. I will also be asking the Vestry to schedule at least one feedback session with the wider parish within two months of that gathering. That's because, friends, this is not just about me and some elected representatives. A message they and you will hear often in coming days is that there are no passengers on the gospel train (I have my Christmas train set on my mind currently) and we are all riding these rails together.

So please, dear family members of St Paul's, put on your finest engineer's cap and come to our annual meeting ready to be part of the crew. As yet another "first" I'm not really sure what to expect but I hope to be blown away by the turnout and enthusiasm. Fingers crossed!

Brian+

Fr Brian Dawson, Rector



Father Brian and his wife the Rev. Karen at his installation



Sunday, January 19

Mark your calendars for the Annual Parish Meeting to be held immediately following the Sunday Worship Service.

Hear about plans for the coming year, elect new Vestry members and Delegates to the Diocesan Conventions, meet new members and catch up with long-time friends.

Refreshments will be provided.

Contact the church office, 209-522-3267, with any questions, or to help with set-up, providing refreshments, or clean-up.

Sock it to 'Em Sunday

Dear St. Paul's Parishioners,

Our recent "Sock it to 'em Sunday" sock drive for the Shower Shuttle was a huge success thanks to Father Brian's leadership and your generosity. I was hoping for 100 pairs of socks, but you far exceeded that hope by donating a giant total of 300 pairs.

The blessings continued with donated hats and scarves from our St. Paul's Knitting Group and friends plus assorted toiletries which are always needed. Over 300 of the neediest among us will have new sox and other items for Christmas.

Sarah Hartman and I were privileged to visit the Shower Shuttle to donate your many gifts. Below are some pictures taken by Sarah.

On behalf of our friends at the Shower Shuttle, thank you, thank you.

Blessings to all,

Judith Thorkelson 🍷🙏🏻🙏🏻🙏🏻

Shower Shuttle – Sock Delivery December 2024



Shower Shuttle – Ready for Clients



Shower Shuttle Open



Shower Shuttle Clients



Judy and Friend



Shower Shuttle Sock Delivery

Celebrated Birthdays in December



December 2024 Birthdays	
Gary Olds	December 4
Linda Lowe	December 6
Alanna Verges	December 8
Carlos Marrujo	December 10
Lora Burnett	December 19
Eric Sheaffer	December 19
Annamary Peck	December 20
Niniv Tamimi	December 30

Prayer and Praise

January 6, 2025

Updates

Praise and Thanksgiving

- ◆ Praise and Thanksgiving for the Beloved Community of St. Paul's.
 - Praise and Thanksgiving for The Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe, our prayers go with Bishop Rowe and his family as they embark on this new journey.
 - Praise and Thanksgiving for Fr. Dawson and his Beloved Spouse, The Rev. Karen.
 - Praise and Thanksgiving for Anthony Coca, please continue to pray for Anthony and his family as the restoration begins due to the fire in their home. Prayers for comfort, strength, peace, and gratitude for all.
 - Praise and Thanksgiving for the healing of Claudine Romegialli's eye. Prayers for continued healing.
 - Praise and Thanksgiving for Ginny Munroe as she heals. Prayers continued healing, comfort, strength, and peace. Please pray for Keith for strength.
 - Praise and Thanksgiving for Sherrie's successful heart surgery, friend of Stephanie Gilmer, please prayer for continued healing, comfort, strength, and peace. Please pray for the family for strength, comfort, and peace.

To quote Thomas Merton, a favorite Catholic Monk and Author, “ – about proceeding in faith despite uncertainty. “You do not need to know precisely what is happening” to embrace challenges “with courage, faith and hope, he said.”

Healing and Comfort

- Prayers for Fr. Bob Woods' beloved wife, Alexis, for healing, comfort, and strength. Prayers for Fr. Bob and family as they care for Alexis for strength, comfort, and peace.
- Prayers for Louisa Bryant for healing, comfort, and peace.
- Prayers for Jimmy's friend of Rex Adamson for healing, comfort, and peace.
- Prayers for Laurence, Sharon Hawley-Crum's Beloved Brother, as he is hospitalized. Please pray for healing, comfort, strength, and peace. Please keep for Laurence's family in prayer for strength and comfort.
- Prayers for Carol Coulter as she is recovering from surgery. Please pray healing, comfort, strength, and peace.
- Prayers for Marlene Jones, Jose Cruz's Beloved Mother, as she is hospitalized. Please pray for healing, comfort, and strength. Please keep Marlene's family in

prayer for strength and comfort.

- Prayers for Jack and family as he is hospitalized and very ill. Prayers for healing, comfort, and strength for all.
- Prayers for Steven a student at Modesto High School as he was in a serious accident. He is in need for prayers of healing, comfort, and strength. Please pray for his family and friends as they rally around Steven.
- Prayers for Mark Kenyon, Lynelle Hains 1st cousin, for healing, comfort, and strength.
- Please pray for the family and friends for comfort and strength.
- Prayers for Deanette, longtime friend of the Cox Family, as she transitioned on December 10th. Prayers for their healing, comfort, and peace.
- Prayers for George Pew and Family for the transitioning of their Beloved Kim.
- Prayers for Toni Clarke for healing, comfort, and peace.
- Prayers for Bonnie Palmer for healing, comfort, and peace.
- Prayers for Loretta for healing, comfort, and peace.
- Prayers for Bob Jensen for healing, comfort, and peace.
- Prayers for Rev. Karen for healing, comfort, and peace.
- Prayers for Nell Gerber for healing, comfort, and peace.
- Prayers for Alfred Spina for healing, comfort, and peace.
- Prayers for Clare Conrotto for healing, comfort, and peace.
- Prayers for Susan Cano for healing, comfort, and peace.
- Prays for Rocky Lowe, David Lowe's brother, for healing, comfort, and peace.
- Prayers for Kelly as he recovers for healing, comfort, patience, and peace.
- Prayers for Susan Sell as she faces serious medical procedures. May her healing be swift and may she experience comfort, strength, patience, and peace.
- Prayers for Christine Jayne as she is hospitalized and needs prayers for healing, strength, comfort, patience, and peace. Please prayer for family as well.
- Prayers for Michael Thorington for continued healing, strength, comfort, patience, and peace.
- Prayers for Marti Persons for healing, strength, and comfort.
- Pray for Howard Grieshaber for healing, strength, and comfort.
- Prayers for Cheryl Grieshaber for strength and comfort.

- Prayers and Thanksgiving for Cherie Sheaffer, prayer for continued healing, strength, and comfort. Please pray for the family for strength, comfort, and peace.
- Pray for Dennis Fitzgerald for healing, strength, and comfort. Dennis is a parishioner at St. Rafael's in Oakhurst. A loving, devote Child of God.
- Pray for Thomas Domeno, friend of Stephanie Gilmer, for healing, strength, and comfort.
- Pray for Christine Judd for healing, strength, and comfort.
- Pray for Mary Kinnaman continued healing, strength, and comfort.
- Pray for Deacon George Cano for continued healing, strength, and comfort.
- Pray for Paige Cano for healing, strength, and comfort.
- Pray Mary Griffin for healing, strength, and comfort.
- ◆ Pray for Mike Cox for healing, comfort, and peace. Prayers for Pam for strength and for the job search of Danny Cox.
 - Pray for Lisa Sosa, friend of Danny Cox, for healing, comfort, and peace.
- ◆ Continued prayers for Ann Mootz's sister-in-law healing, comfort, and peace.
- ◆ Elaine Paradis, please pray healing, strength, comfort, and peace.
 - Prayers for Sue Tupper, friend of the Cox family, for healing comfort and peace.
 - Prayers for Joy Burton, Bonnie Palmer's sister-in-law, for healing, comfort, and peace.
 - Prayers for Kristina Fridas for healing, comfort, and peace.
 - Prayers for Roxy Fridas for peace, comfort, and healing.
- ◆ Please pray for the those in war torn areas everywhere; Ukraine, Holy Land, Gaza, Palestine, and Afghanistan .
 - Please pray for Ken and Trish Hart for healing, comfort, and peace.
 - Please pray for Ismael Huggins for healing, comfort, and peace as he is dealing with health issues.
 - Polly, Beloved Grandmother and Colleen, Beloved Great Aunt of Gabriel for healing, strength, comfort, and peace.
 - Please pray for Gabriel as he continues to job search. May he be granted wisdom, strength, peace, and faith.
 - Please pray for Priscilla Abercrombie for healing, strength, comfort, and peace. Priscilla is a new member of St. Paul's, living in Dale Commons of Manteca.

- Please pray for the Frank and Kathryn Remkiewicz family as they transition from the loss of their Beloved Rebecca. May healing, comfort and peace be with them. Prayers also for Kathryn for healing, comfort, and strength due to medical challenges.
- Please Prayer for Denise Cano, daughter of Deacon and Paige Cano, for healing, comfort, and peace.

Special Prayers

- Please pray for Rex Adamson and the Ukraine Project and his mission.
- Please pray for all the peoples of Kazakhstan especially the Christians as they face lack of religious freedom and have become targets of persecution. Please remember the Adamson family, Rex's brother and sister-in-law and their Christian community.
- Please pray for the American people to listen to God's will on their hearts and do unto others as they would want done to them and their families.

Safe Travel ♦ Please pray for all travelers as they journey to and from their destinations.

- Prayers for David West for safe travel and success on his journey.

Cookie Walk 2024

The annual Cookie Walk featuring LOTS of cookies and assorted other goodies is in the books. A large team of dedicated bakers, planners, set-up, and clean-up crew, same-day helpers and vendors combined to make the Advent Season very sweet. Two days of set-up, walking, running, and baking some more provided St. Paul's with the chance to invite the community to our campus.

The committee that planned the event included Judy Teter, Toni Clark, Joyce Bell, Sarah Hartmann, Jose Cruz (aka Santa), Peter Krewko, Carolyn List, Suzanne Antirien, Matthew Antirien, Katie Biglow and Linda Lowe. In addition to the cookies, the fun included craft and food vendors, visits with Santa, make-your-own Christmas decorations (jumping Jesus anyone?), and special baked goods.

Community members have reported that they loved all the extra parts to the Cookie Walk. They also have said that they look forward each year to the wide variety of cookies and the chance to kick off their holiday season at St. Paul's. Special thanks to all the bakers, walkers, platers, ticket-takers, set-up and clean-up crew, vendors and especially those who purchased tickets. The group effort raised over \$4,100. This fundraiser continues to be one of the best ways that St. Paul's members connect with each other and the community. Please enjoy the pictures below, taken at the event.



Raffle Prizes and Wicket



Waiting to tie the Bow

Treasurer's Report - November

Profit and Loss Statement for June – November 2024

Categories	24-Jun	24-Jul	24-Aug	24-Sep	24-Oct	24-Nov
Operating Income:	14,984.56	17,903.13	12,196.61	18,686.57	14,911.60	14,744.10
Facility Use:	6,000.00	700	12,163.00	6,300.00	0	6,300.00
Fundraisers:	0	0	0	12	0	1,730.00
Outreach:	0	0	0	985	0	7
Restricted Income:	6,817.00	3,680.00	9,531.50	2,670.34	1,833.00	1,439.00
Total Income:	27,801.56	22,283.13	33,891.11	28,653.91	16,744.60	24,220.10
Expenses:	22,339.56	26,106.13	54,005.69	19,426.31	39,852.64	22,997.14
Net Income/loss:	5,462.00	-3,823.00	-20,114.58	9,227.57	-23,108.04	1,769.10

Table 1: Treasurer's Report for November 2024

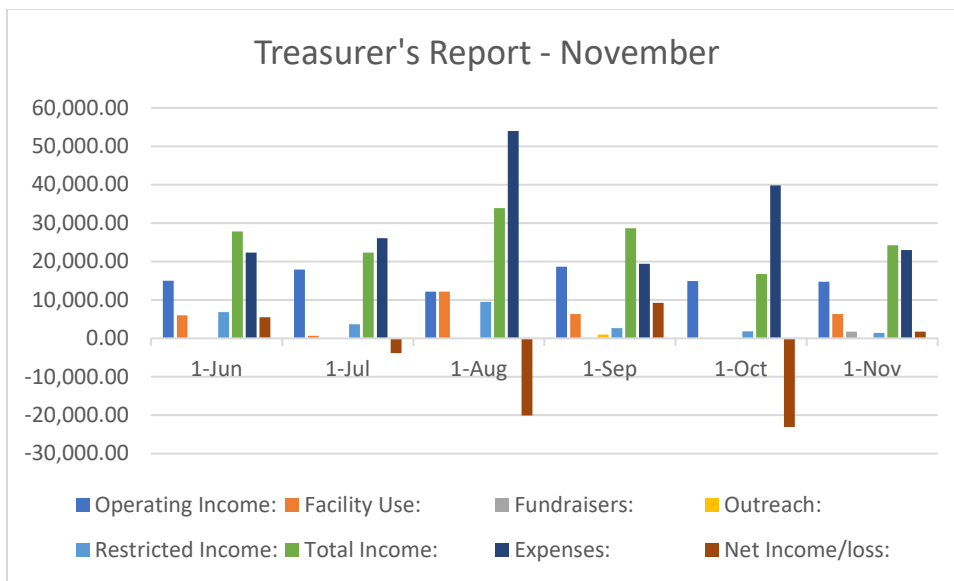
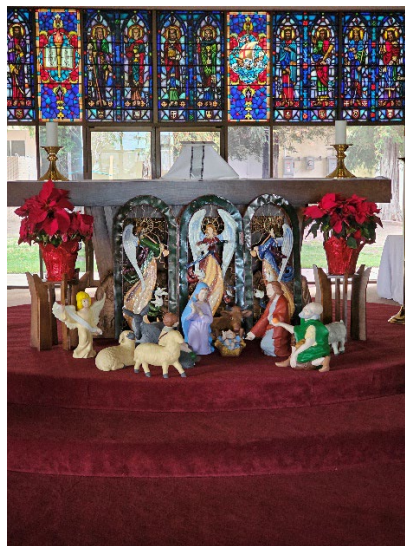


Figure 1: Treasurer's Report June-November 2024

Christmas Eve Family Service

Christmas Eve Family Service and Decorations. Attendees enjoyed the re-telling of the first Christmas with participation by children and adults, crafts, carols, and a visit with Santa, complete with candy.





What's New at St. Paul's

- ✓ Generous and consistent support from everyone has enabled us to meet our obligations. We continue to monitor the best ways to handle the funds given by everyone, keeping expenses in check, and looking for the best returns on our investments.
- ✓ The budget for 2025 was approved unanimously. Thanks go to Stephanie Gilmer, Carolyn List, and Judy Teter for their work presenting the budget to the Vestry.
- ✓ **Sunday School continues to be available for students. Contact Chuck Sheaffer (209-765-1214) for information about the weekly study and the fun stuff being planned.**
- ✓ Guidelines for use of the St. Paul's facilities are being reviewed and updated. *Want to be part of the committee? Contact Linda in the church office, 209-522-3267.*
- ✓ The report from the Stewardship Committee is that the number of pledges and amount of support for the church increased this year. Many thanks to all who have committed to support the ministries of St. Paul's.
- ✓ **The Annual Parish Meeting will be January 19. Come hear about new plans and participate in the election of Vestry members and Delegates to the Diocesan Conventions.**
- ✓ Repairs will be made to the sprinkler system, mainly around the school buildings. Electrical work will be done in the church and parish hall.
- ✓ Deacon Greg Maszta will continue to be assigned by Bishop David to St. Paul's-Yay!

Vestry meetings are open for anyone to attend. The meetings are a combination of in-person and virtual meetings. Contact Linda Lowe in the church office, 209-522-3267, or stpaulsmodestoca@gmail.com for the schedule and zoom link.



Salvation Army Shelter Dinner, January 2025

The Shelter Dinner Team will be cooking and serving dinner, in January to 140 guests and staff at the shelter for unhoused people. The menu will include sliced pork chops, rolls and butter, assorted side dishes, fruit, the ever-popular chocolate chip cookies and milk.

Plans are being made to serve dinner five other times in 2025: March, May, July, September, and November. We have been fortunate to receive items in the monthly Commodities Program that can be used to build the meals. Other parts of the meals are provided by various members of the Team or are purchased using money donated specifically for the dinners. Some members of the Team donate food items, others donate their time to preparing the meals and serving at the Shelter. We have never turned anyone away who wants to be part of this ministry. Prayer support, with various forms of assistance, is always greatly appreciated.

For the Team, meeting the people and providing the meals is a great blessing. Please contact Linda Lowe, 209-496-3937 or lwlowe@outlook.com for more information.



Vestry Candidate Bios

Joyce Bell

I'm Joyce Bell, a lifelong Episcopalian, and a member of St. Paul's for over six years. My family includes my mom, Sarah Hartmann, my sister, Ellen Bell; and our two rescue greyhounds, Nika and Shelby.

Originally from the Midwest, I spent 20 years in Philadelphia, where I worked in research administration in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania. During that time, I attended St. Mark's Episcopal Church and later became a member of the historic St. Peter's Episcopal Church. My involvement there included serving on the altar guild and supporting our sister parish in Guatemala. A subsequent move brought me to a small suburban church, where I taught the middle school Journey to Adulthood class, prepared meals for Aid for Friends, served as an acolyte and chalice bearer, and joined the vestry. Eleven years ago, I moved to Turlock to be closer to family.

Joining St. Paul's has been one of the most rewarding choices I've ever made. The warm and welcoming congregation, along with the inspiring liturgy, makes me feel deeply grateful and truly at home. Being part of such a supportive community motivates me to give back and do what I can to help keep this parish thriving. I've had the privilege of previously serving on the vestry at St. Paul's and spending three years as Senior Warden.

Outside of church, I serve as the Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at California State University, Stanislaus. My career in research administration spans over 30 years, beginning at the University of Pennsylvania, where I earned a B.S. in Political Science. I later completed a Master's degree in Research Administration from Johns Hopkins University. After 11 years at Stan State, I remain passionate about fostering and expanding research on campus.

Ismael Huggins

I was born in Vieques, an island that belongs to Puerto Rico. My family has been Episcopalians since my great grandparents left the island of St. Kitts. In the 1930's blacks were not allowed in the Catholic Church and the Episcopal and Methodist churches were the only ones that welcomed them. At 14 years old, my parents sent me to a boarding school named The Spanish American Institute in Los Angeles to complete my high school education and learn English. I graduated from Long Beach State University in 1976, with a sociology degree. I received my master's degree from San Jose State University and worked as a family counselor in Santa Cruz, CA for 31 years. I returned to Puerto Rico in 2014 and was elected Junior Guardian for two years at All Saints Episcopal Church in Vieques. My wife passed away in 2016, and I decided to move back to CA. I have two lovely daughters. I'm very proud to be an Episcopalian and being of service to St. Paul's would be a joy and welcomed duty!

Peter Krewko

Before moving to Modesto in May of this year, I attended Ascension Episcopal in Vallejo, California. Seven years ago, I was asked by our Rector, Fr. Bayani Rico, to serve on our vestry. To be honest, I never served on the governance board of a church, and I did not know what to expect. I asked for God's help when I began serving on the vestry.

I soon discovered that I had many gifts that I could bring to the vestry. My ability to be a good listener, coupled with discerning and problem-solving skills, gave me a practical approach to tackling and prioritizing our church needs. In collaboration with the full vestry membership, we worked together and always accomplished the many items on our agenda. Everything is possible with God!

Three years ago, I was called upon to serve as the Junior Warden. My responsibilities required an expanded leadership role on the vestry. I worked on soliciting bids for a new alarm and security system for the church. I also oversaw keeping our church grounds and memorial garden well maintained. There were also plumbing issues. Computer upgrades part of our vestry challenges.

The best part of being on the vestry, to me, was interacting with the parishioners at Ascension. I really enjoyed talking with members who became part of my extended family. I loved talking about our church during the stewardship campaign and giving

talks to the parish. I enjoyed writing the stewardship letter and creating the stewardship theme.

I am looking forward to serving St. Paul's and being a faithful servant of the Lord.

Glory to God

Courtney Smith

Courtney joined St. Paul's Episcopal Church in 2022 after relocating to Modesto the same year. In that time, she has been an active volunteer for the Stewardship Committee, participated in the Cookie Walk, and engaged in thoughtful discussions with the Noonday Prayer group. She is dedicated to community engagement, and you'll find her regularly engaged in fellowship with parishioners and encouraging outreach between the church and the greater community. Previously, Courtney has been a member of Episcopal churches in Los Angeles, Ohio, Indiana, and Georgia where she has been involved in music ministry and interfaith cultural exploration.

Celebrating Birthdays in January



January 2025 Birthdays	
Phil Machado	January 10
John Cox	January 12
Gabriela Maestas	January 13
Jeff Mountain	January 19
Darcee Maestas	January 23

**MONTHLY
MINISTRY
SCHEDULES**

January Ministry Schedule

	Jan 5th	Jan 12th	Jan 19th	Jan 26th
Clergy	Fr. Brian	Fr. Brian	Fr. Brian	Fr. Brian
Acolytes	Nancy S. Judy T.	Jim P. Nancy S.	Judy T. Nancy S.	Nancy S. Judy T.
Eucharistic Minister	Stephanie G.	Nancy S.	Judy	Rex
Lectors	Stephanie G. Linda L.	Joyce B. Alex S.	Nancy S. Stephanie H-W.	Barbara V. Judy T.
Intercessor	Linda L.	Judy T.	Lora B.	Luis M.
Ushers	Claudine R. David L.	Ishmael H. Phil M.	Greg B. Claudine R.	Phil M. David L.
Greeters	Claudine R. David L.	Ishmael H. Phil M.	Greg B. Claudine R.	Phil M. David L.
Vestry Rep.	Linda L.	Judy T.	Lora B.	Luis M.



The Epistle

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

January 2025 Volume 16,
Number 01

Church Office Phone: 209-522-3267
Office Hours: 8:30-1:30 Mon – Thurs

Pastoral Team

Fr. Brian Dawson - 209-897-1612 - FrBrianDawson@gmail.com
Archdeacon Emeritus, George Cano
Deacon Greg Maszta deacongreg66@outlook.com

Other Important Contacts

Music Director, Organist & Choir Chuck Sheaffer, cbshea@pacbell.net

Hand Bells

Judy Teter, jltpt@sbcglobal.net

St. Paul's Epistle & Bulletins

Cherie Sheaffer, cbshea@pacbell.net

St. Paul's Social Media

Greg Maszta,
deacongreg66@outlook.com

Stewardship Campaign

Sarah Hartmann

Finance Committee

Carolyn List, carolynlist@sbcglobal.net

Praesidium Academy

Stephanie Gilmer

Vestry

Senior Warden - Linda Lowe -
209-496-3937 lwlowe@outlook.com

Jr. Warden - Judy Teter

Lora Burnett

Sarah Hartmann

Luis Martinez

Ann Mootz

Chuck Sheaffer

Nancy Silva

Judy Teter

Treasurer - Stephanie Gilmer (non-vestry)

Vestry Clerk: Carolyn List

Sunday Services

Holy Eucharist at 10 am in the church and live streamed on Facebook.

You can find a link to the live stream on our web page.

Sunday School during the Homily

www.saintpaulsmodesto.org

Visit and like us on Facebook
St. Paul's Episcopal Church of Modesto, CA

