

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

The Epistle

February 2025 Issue



The Bond Of Peace – Ephesians 4:3

Anyone who has known Paige and I for any length of time knows that we are both fans of the written word. We love books. You will also know that my life's love has an affliction called Macular Degeneration; in other words, she is losing her ability to see well enough to read. Over the last couple of years, we have come up with a way to continue our love of reading. I have become Paige's "talking book." We begin each morning with a meditation from Henri J. Nouwen's book "You Are The Beloved: Daily Meditations for Spiritual Living." Next, we pray two prayers; first, the prayer for the slaughter of the Holy Innocents by King Herod (page 186 in The Book of Common Prayer).

"Let us pray:

We remember today, O God, the slaughter of the Holy Innocents of Bethlehem by King Herod. Receive, we pray, into the arms of Your mercy all innocent victims; and by Your great might frustrate the designs of evil tyrants and establish Your rule of justice, love and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen."

Although the Church celebrates The Holy Innocents on December 28th, we feel this should be a daily prayer for peace as long as there are evil tyrants and those that perpetuate the killing of Holy Innocents: the sisters and brothers of you and I. The Beloved of God. Our second prayer is The Prayer for Peace, which we know as The Prayer of St. Francis, in which we are asked to be instruments of God's Peace (#62, page 833 in The Book of Common Prayer).

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

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 Archdeacon Emeritus George Cano
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Vestry

Senior Warden: Joyce Bell (215) 275-6502bellj1@charter.net
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Joyce Bell, Lora Burnett, Sarah Hartmann, Ishmael Huggins, Peter Krewko, Luis Martinez, Ann Mootz, Chuck Sheaffer, Nancy Silva, and Courtney Smith.

Treasurer: Greg Burnett

Vestry Clerk: Carolyn List

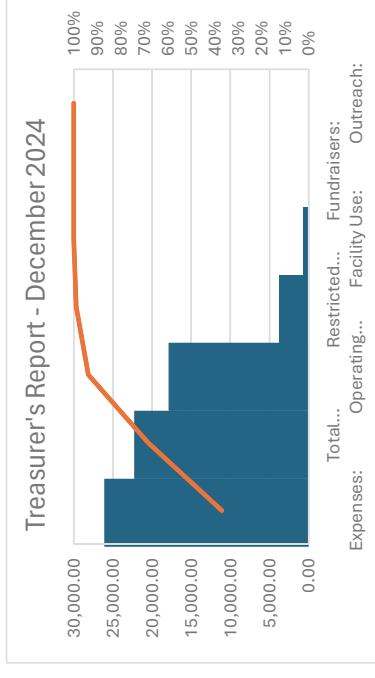


After our prayers, we then read books on many different topics, including poetry. We have already read “Crazy Christians,” a call to follow Jesus’ written by our former presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry; “Grapes of Wrath” by John Steinbeck; “Below the Salt” by Thomas Costain; A biography called “Peace Pilgrim” by an organization that calls itself *Friends of Peace Pilgrim*; a university study on the origin and use of The Golden Rule; an historical fiction novel on the life of St. Dunstan; “The Far Pavilions” by M.M. Kaye; and “When the Light of the World Was Subdued, Our Songs Came Through: A Norton Anthology of Native Nations Poetry,” which was edited by Joy Harjo, the 23rd United States Poet Laureate and the first Native American to hold that honor (and only the second to have served three terms).

We are currently reading a book authored by Joy Harjo titled, “A Map to the Next World,” which is a book of poems and tales. On the dedication page, we have found our closing prayer: “With praise for the Breathmaker, through whose intent we arrive here, and by whose grace we leave.”

I have already written quite a bit just to get to the point I would like to make. It seems to me that all of our readings so far seem to share in part a common theme: the search for inner peace. The inner peace I speak of is a familiar verse of Philippians 4:7, “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” This peace is not about the absence of war and strife; it is an inner joy we may receive when we trust and love our Lord. In preparation for this article, I found lists of fifty or more verses that tell us of this peace. I thought I might pass along a few of these verses, not a full list, but just enough to encourage you to seek out more verses yourself.

- *Psalm 37: 37 “Consider the blameless observe the upright; a future awaits those who seek peace.*
- *Ephesians 4:3 “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*
- *Matthew 5:9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”*
- *Psalm 29:11 “The Lord gives strength to his people, and the Lord blesses his people with peace.”*
- *Isaiah 26:3 “You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.”*
- *Romans 12:18 “ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ”*



February Ministry Schedule

Dates	Feb 2 nd	Feb 9 th	Feb 16 th	Feb 23 rd
Clergy	Fr. Brian	Fr. Brian	Fr. Brian	Fr. Brian
Acolytes	Judy T.	Nancy S. Judy T.	Nancy S. Jim P.	Nancy S. Judy T.
Eucharistic Minister	Stephanie G.	Nancy S.	Judy	Rex
Lectors	Stephanie G. Theresa G.	Nancy S. Stephanie H-W.	Joyce B. Alex S.	Barbara V. Judy T.
Intercessor	Ann M.	Joyce B.	Nancy S.	Peter K.
Ushers	Carolyn L. Greg B.	Phil M. David L.	Greg B. Claudine R.	Ishmael H. Carolyn L.
Greeters	Carolyn L. Greg B.	Phil M. David L.	Greg B. Claudine R.	Ishmael H. Carolyn L.
Vestry Rep.	Ann M.	Joyce B.	Nancy S.	Peter K.

Salvation Army Dinner

The Salvation Army Dinner Team served dinner Sunday, January 26th to 120 guests and staff at the Shelter in downtown Modesto. The menu included a casserole of pork, rice & teriyaki sauce, mixed veggies, croissants, orange wedges, chocolate chip cookies, and milk. Our time and dinners are always greatly appreciated as we bring interesting and tasty meals, with the cookies and milk always a hit.

The Team works together, providing the various parts of the menu, preparing the meal in the church kitchen, transporting it in a caravan to the Shelter, and serving it to the guests and staff. It is a special blessing to the Team to visit with the guests and staff and see the way that we are meeting specific needs.

We welcome involvement by everyone, beginning with prayers for the guests, staff, and the Team. We gladly accept monetary donations, donations of various parts of the meal, assistance with preparation, and help serving at the Shelter. Contact Linda Lowe, 209-496-3937, lwlowe@outlook.com, for more information.

Treasurer's Report – December 2024

Categories	July - 24	August - 24	Sept - 24	Oct - 24	Nov - 24	Dec - 24
Operating Income	17,903.13	12,196.61	18,686.57	14,911.60	14,744.10	27,520.40
Facility Use:	700	12,163.00	6,300.00	0	6,300.00	13,350.00
Fundraisers:	0	0	12	0	1,730.00	2,809.00
Outreach:	0	0	985	0	7	0
Restricted Income:	3,680.00	9,531.50	2,670.34	1,833.00	1,439.00	1,456.75
Total Income:	22,283.13	33,891.11	28,653.91	16,744.60	24,220.10	45,137.12
Expenses:	26,106.13	54,005.69	19,426.31	39,852.64	22,997.14	25,225.80
Net Income/loss:	-3,823.00	20,114.58	9,227.57	23,108.04	1,769.10	19,911.32

Table 1: Treasurer's Report - December 2024

- *John 16:33 "I have said these things to you, that in me you will have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart, I have overcome the world."*
- *2 Thessalonians 3:16 "Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all"*

P.S. I almost forgot, we are currently reading "The Collected Autobiography of Maya Angelou as well, one of my personal heroes.

"With praise for the Breathmaker, through whose intent we arrive here, and by whose grace we leave."

In the Lord's Peace, I offer my poem to you.

Your Servant in Christ, Deacon George

The Ghetto That Knows My Name

The ghetto of my childhood – the one that knows my name – is a community whose boundaries are defined by the struggles of its poor. Poor black sharecroppers from the South, making one final attempt to break the chains of slavery, clawed their way to California and the promise of freedom. Poor Chinese and Koreans came, searching for their dreams; from Spain, Portugal and Italy people came, speaking in halted English phrases. Seeking jobs, food and shelter, they dreamed all the while of a time in that golden future when they would be peasants no more.

We lived side by side, shoulder to shoulder, culture to culture, straining against the bonds of racism and prejudice. We fought the fear that couldn't be quenched, that feeling of being trapped by the lack of economic opportunity, by being ground up in the mill of self-doubt and self-hatred.

We laughed the laugh, walked the walk, and did our dance. We put on our street faces and walked the two miles to high school, too proud to take the yellows buses sent for us, while our classmates from other parts of town drove the cards their daddy's bought. The goal was always to escape, to reach a level of wealth where no one would ask where you came from. And you wouldn't ever have to think of the ghetto that knows your name.

*Some of us did escape, but we lost each other in our flight. The aching fear of being drawn back into that dark place was stronger for some than the love we had for each other. We planned our lives to be in places where we'd never have to feel the pain of the curled lip, fiery eyes, and hateful words like "n****er," "wop," "spick," or "poor white trash."*

For many, that escape was through education: college scholarships won in battle on the fields, courts, and rings of our high school. Trade schools for some; for others, the military offered the answer. In any case, it was never a matter of success or failure. Only the escape mattered – to get to that free “Someplace” where you wouldn’t be frightened anymore.

Those of us who have survived have walked in others’ shoes, seeing through the eyes of our friends and feeling their pain. Wherever our dreams have led us, we all still know that child inside us, the child from the ghetto who knows our name. – George Cano, May 1997



Sunday School at John’s Incredible Pizza

Saturday, February 1st, Chuck Sheaffer and Ann-Marie Lorentz took six members of the Diaz family to John’s Incredible Pizza. As the name implies, they enjoyed Incredible Pizza, fellowship, and all the fun parts of John’s place. Chuck and Ann-Marie will be planning other fun things for Sunday School participants. Watch your email in boxes for future details!

Help Need for Parochial Report



Every year St. Paul's is required to complete the Parochial Report, a requirement of being part of the Episcopal Church. The report includes statistics about the previous year and a few narrative questions. The report is due to the Diocesan office no later than March 1st. The Diocesan staff will include it along with reports from the other congregations.

I need input from any and all of you for the following three questions:

1. How is your parish reducing your carbon footprint?
2. What is one program or initiative at your Church that you feel best exemplifies your congregation?
3. What is one program or initiative at your Church that represents your hope for the future of your congregation or the greater Episcopal Church?

Please send me your thoughts no later than Wednesday February 19th. Many thanks!

Linda Lowe, Parish Administrator



Lenten Studies 2025

Fr Brian will be offering two options for Lenten studies this year. One will be in person on Tuesdays following Noonday Prayer and the other on Zoom early Sunday evenings. Both will be focused on a newly published book called Turning Over Tables - A Lenten Call For Disrupting Power by Kathy Escobar.



We would like to put in a bulk order for the books so if you intend to come to the studies and would like a copy please add your details to the sheet in the entrance of the church or contact the parish office. The price will depend on how many we buy but should be approximately \$15.

Another Lenten book study opportunity will be on mornings from 11 AM-noon on 4 Thursdays after morning Eucharist. The dates will be March 13, 20, 27 and April 3. We will be discussing the book, Can You Drink the Cup? written by Henri Nouwen. Books will be available for \$3. The study will be led by Rex Adamson. All are welcome for one or all sessions. This is a short book of only 4 chapters and is easy reading on a profound topic related to the question Jesus asked the apostles, "Can you drink the cup I drink?" A sign-up sheet will be available in the Narthex.

Pancakes....Pancakes....Pancakes Shrove Tuesday



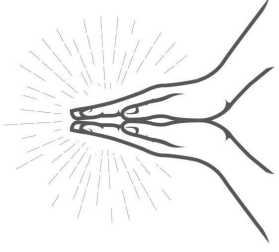
March 4th will be Shrove Tuesday....our time to enjoy marking the night before Ash Wednesday by eating pancakes. This year will be a fundraiser for Boy Scouts as they flip and serve pancakes as the delicious way to move into Lent.

And....back by popular demand, Chuck's Talent Show! Want to participate? Contact Chuck, 209-765-1214.

Sunday School – Pizza Party and Chuck!



Chuck playing at the Stanislaus County High School Honor Choir – January 2025



Prayer and Praise

February 16, 2025

Remember those who have asked for our prayers

Alexa	Pam	Deacon George	Suzan	Robin
Pricella	Laurence	Louisa	Marlene	Mark
Mauro	Loretta	Kelly	Gabriel	Joy
Bonnie	Alfred	Clare	Michael	Rocky
Dennis	Michael	Daniel	Ishmael	Lisa
Bob	Mary	Howard	Cheryl	Marti
Tony	Joanne	Janet	JoAnne	Linda
Ginny	Keith	Brett	Sasha	JoHanna
Denise	Toni	Ken	Susan	Mary

Joyce R.

Those who have been called back to God

Christine Jayne
 Carol DeMaria Donati Hertle
 Elaine Paradis

Those in the Military

1st Lt. Sam Birch, Army
 Lt. Col. Nathaniel P. Wallace, Air Force
 Capt. Jeavieve Campbell, Air Force
 Capt. Fred Campbell, Air Force

Special Prayers

The Clergy, Vestry, and Wardens

Celebrating Birthdays in February

February 2025 Birthdays	
Valerie Peters	February 6
Elaine Paradis	February 11
Elizabeth Cassagio	February 13
Dominic Maestas	February 15
Craig Persons	February 23
Beatriz Peters	February 27
Mary Su	February 27
Deacon George	February 28

Celebrating Anniversaries in February



February 2025 Anniversaries	
Phil and Anita Machado	February 10
Niniv and Rossana Tamimi	February 14
Craig and Marti Persons	February 28

Handbells:



Rehearsals have begun to include handbell music in our worship services, No prior experience or ability are necessary. If you can count to 4 and hold a bell, have the interest to learn and contribute to the music ministry, you are welcome.

Questions? Contact Judy Teter, 209-480-5383.

Chuck Sheaffer Honored

Friday evening, January 31st, our Music Director, Chuck Sheaffer was honored by the Stanislaus County Music Educators Association. He was given their Lifetime Achievement Award for the many contributions he has made to Music Education. Chuck has been part of the music programs throughout the County for many years, teaching, guiding, accompanying, and encouraging students and adults in a wide variety of programs. The award was given to him at the concert of the Stanislaus County High School Honor Choir. As the Music Director at St. Paul's, he has chosen the music for the Sunday worship services, included music in weekly Sunday School classes, worked with the children at Hazel's Pre-School, led the Choir, and been an integral part of the Handbell Choir. Congratulations, Chuck!



Chuck at the Stanislaus County High School Honor Choir – January 2025

In Memoriam



It is with deep sadness that the St. Paul's family announces the passing of Elaine Paradis, a beloved and active member of our community. Elaine's dedication and service touched many lives within St. Paul's and beyond.

Elaine was a vital part of St. Paul's, serving as Co-Director of the Altar Guild, where her devotion and attention to detail were greatly appreciated. Her passion for knitting extended to her role as the main teacher for Knit One, Pray Two, where she shared her skills and fostered a warm and welcoming community. She generously shared her talents and enthusiasm with others.

Beyond her contributions within the church, Elaine was a registered nurse and a respected educator of other nurses. Her commitment to healthcare and her passion for teaching made a significant impact on the nursing community. This dedication to caring for others extended to St. Paul's, where Elaine was instrumental in bringing AED machines to the church and training members in their proper use. Her foresight and initiative have undoubtedly made St. Paul's a safer place.

Elaine's faithful presence and active participation in the life of St. Paul's will be deeply missed. She leaves behind a legacy of service, compassion, and dedication that will be remembered by all who knew her.

We will gather to celebrate Elaine's life on Friday, March 7th, at 10:00 am. We offer our heartfelt condolences to her family and friends.

Annual Meeting Highlights



Pictured: Fr. Brian, Judy, Stephanie and Linda.

The Parish Annual Meeting was held Sunday, January 19th following the worship service. Forty-six people checked in, enjoyed the usual delicious brunch, and had the opportunity to review the various reports in the Annual Report for 2024.

Fr. Brian chaired the meeting which included voting on new Vestry members, delegates to the Diocesan Conventions for 2025, review of the parish financial situation, and a discussion about our reasons for participating in the life of the parish. The attendees agreed to increase the number of Vestry members from 9 to 11. The 4 members who were introduced as candidates for the Vestry gave brief statements and were voted in as new members by acclamation. They include Joyce Bell, Senior Warden, Peter Krewko, Courtney Smith, and Ismael Huggins.

Fr. Brian announced that there will be two Diocesan Conventions-October 18th to elect a new Diocesan Bishop, and the Annual Convention, November 7th and 8th. Peter Krewko and Courtney Smith were nominated as delegates, and Nancy Silva

and Niniv Tamimi agreed to be alternates. The delegates and alternates were approved by acclamation.

Stephanie Gilmer, the outgoing Treasurer, spoke about the 2024 Financial Report and the 2025 Budget. An adjustment of \$4,000.00 has been made to the 2024 income due to a misunderstanding in the way that Fr. Brian's salary was paid. Fr. Brian noted that we are grateful for the assistance from the Diocese for his salary, but he is hoping that we won't need to continue to receive that assistance after 2025. He also is hoping to be able to include the salary of the Parish Administrator in the 2026 Budget.

Table discussions centered on the members' reasons for being part of St. Paul's, with a time of sharing those reasons. Answers included how members felt welcomed by the congregation, the liturgy, the music, and opportunities to help people outside of the church.

Fr. Brian thanked the outgoing Vestry members, Judy Teter and Linda Lowe, and Stephanie Gilmer.

Deacon Greg closed the meeting with prayer.



Music Ministry Opportunities

The choir has started to rehearse music for worship services in the coming weeks and months. Join the group for Sunday morning rehearsals: 9 -9:40 am, in the choir area by the organ console.

Questions? Contact Chuck Sheaffer, 209-765-1214.

All are welcome to come help us make a joyful noise!