

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

The Epistle

May-June 2025 Issue



A Lent of Lents

I am sure that if each one of us took the time we might recall a certain professor, teacher, or counselor that changed our way of thought or living. I met just such a person in seminary, the Rev. Rick Matters, the former Rector of St. John the Baptist, Lodi. Rev. Rick was my homiletics professor. I began seminary at the ripe old age of sixty-three, a long-time post school age. All my life I had been afraid of standing up and reading or speaking before even a small group of people. Imagine the panic I experienced when Fr. Rick told us that our final test would be standing up in our home church and preaching. As if that wasn't enough stress for me, I would have to be filmed as I preached. The film was to be turned over to him and he would critique the homily and send us his observation and our final grade, telling us whether or not we would be licensed to preach. Father wrote to me that I had something to say, but that I had spent two-thirds of my preaching time retelling the readings that we had just heard. To be exact, he wrote "people can hear, and people can read along so you don't have to repeat the readings. People want to hear how the scriptures affected you." This was life changing. I would be free to truly be able to share my thoughts. I didn't have to be an expert theologian; I needed to be open and honest. I needed to share my joy and thanksgiving, my struggle. I have tried to preach, write, and live by that wisdom that was passed on to me by Rev Rick.

This year, as Lent approached, something strange, wonderful, and unexpected happened. Lent didn't begin on Ash Wednesday with the administration of ashes, and the words from Genesis "You are dust and to dust you shall return," rather, it began several weeks earlier with an unexpected phone call. The call was from my dear friend Tony, a man I had always called my big brother. Our friendship, which had begun prior to our high school years had all but ended. The

last time we had seen each other was at the funeral of my son Bob, March 18th, 2006. It seemed at that time that life had happened, and we couldn't find a way to be back together. Then came the phone call. That oh-so-familiar voice was on the line, "Hey, I'd like to see you, take you and Paige out to lunch, and just talk." We chose the day, and I could barely wait to see my big brother again. As we ended the call, that old guilt returned, the guilt that says it was my fault for letting our friendship go. What could I do or say that might help heal the wound? Finally, the big day came, and it was just like we had never parted. Our time together was filled with hugs, tears, and talk of getting together again soon. In a quiet moment, Tony said something that went straight to my heart, something that I never expected. My big brother looked at me and said, "I want you to stop taking all the blame for letting our friendship fade away. I have to share the blame, because I never tried to do anything about it either." Until that moment, nothing about blame had even been mentioned. I guess he could sense my feelings because that was how he felt also. The next few weeks were filled with emails, phone calls, and even some "snail mail" letters. I was so relieved and happy, I felt as though a great weight had been lifted from my heart. Then one day, I received a phone call no one wants to get. Tony's daughter, Sue, was the caller, and tearfully she said to me, "I hate to have to tell you this, but your friend, the one you love, has suffered a massive stroke and has died." We said no more after. I sobbed, "I'm so sorry," then we hung up our phones. I then thought of what Tony had said about sharing the blame. In that instant, healing came to both of us. Without being conscious of it at the time, we had done something God's way.

Matthew 5; 23-24

Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there

Remember that your brother or sister has something against you,

Leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be

Reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

And with this, Lent began.

The beginning of Lent 2025 Ash Wednesday fell on March 5th. Paige and I had purchased a Lenten study booklet, *Pauses for Lent*, written by Trevor Hudson. The study was written with an economy of words and simply subtitled 40 words for 40 days. I think that deep in our thoughts and prayers, we were looking for answers concerning death and dying. The sudden passing of our friend Tony was still fresh in our minds, and on March 4th we received a phone call from our daughter Jeanne. She called with heartbreaking news: her twenty-two-year-old son, our grandson, had mixed an over-the-counter drug with alcohol and was in a hospital ICU in Tennessee. Jeanne told us the doctors had pronounced Jaden brain dead. Our grandson had been a warm, loving person who had always thought more of others than of himself. As wonderful as Jaden was, he carried a demon on his back. He was addicted to alcohol and drugs. Jeanne told us she was going to get a flight to Tennessee because she wanted to make sure her son had not died in vain, and

that he would not die alone. She made sure Jaden's organs and tissues were donated so that others might live and love their Lord God, their families and friends. In this giving of himself, Jaden would receive life everlasting.

Jaden has already given a second chance in life to a thirty-year-old Missouri farmer who received Jaden's heart and a kidney; A forty-year-old Alabama mother of two is the recipient of Jaden's other kidney and pancreas; Jaden's liver has given renewed hope to a Tennessee man in his thirties who is a cook and the father of nine children; Jaden's lungs are giving the breath of life to a forty-year-old Tennessee mother of two and factory worker; Jaden's tissues will be utilized by many individuals needing reconstructive surgeries due to trauma.

I realize this is a rather long article, and that the contents may push our thoughts to places we'd rather not venture; but this past Lent has really forced me to see the sacrifice made for us in first-hand terms; not just a story from long ago, but a living, breathing reality of the cross of Jesus.

Trevor Hudson in Pauses for Lent says it so heartfelt, so clear:

However, the fact that we are marked by the sign of the cross tells us we are infinitely more than dust. We are God's beloved, and nothing – not even death – can separate us from God's love through Jesus Christ. Our dust is charged with God's own life-sustaining and death-defeating breath. We are beloved dust.

Daily Practice

Go outside and pick up a handful of soil. As you do so, focus on these two symbols: dust and the cross. Even as you wash the dirt from your hands, remember the reality of your identity: you are dust redeemed by the cross.

Your Servant in Christ,

Deacon George

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

-Joy Harjo



Picnic at The Church

Come help us celebrate Ed Bearden's 85th birthday

Date: June 24, 2025

Time: 1:30 – 3:30 PM

**Where: St. Paul's Episcopal Church
1528 Oakdale Rd. Modesto**

**A picnic lunch will be served.
Sandwiches, Chips, Cake
Coffee, Tea and Water**

Please RSVP to:

Roberta Bearden at bertbear714@gmail.com or 209-522-9600

Schedule:

Introduction of Family by Roberta

Remarks by Ed

Lunch

Open Mic for Poetry or Other Remarks

Poetry Reading by Ed

Please Sign Guest Book

No Gifts Please

Hope to see you at this special occasion



What's New at St. Paul's



The generous support from members has continued to allow St. Paul's to meet various obligations. The financial statements for February and March were approved.

A proposal was discussed to potentially establish a "Sister Church" relationship with Christ's Church, an Anglican Church in Kiev, Ukraine. Additional information will be gathered on the logistics of the relationship and will be discussed at the May meeting.

At the Annual Meeting it was decided to increase the number of Vestry members to 11. Since we currently have 10 Vestry members, Fr. Brian proposed filling the vacant position by encouraging another church member to be part of the Vestry for the balance of 2025. That person could run for a 3-year term beginning in January 2026.

The policies and guidelines for Memorial/Funeral services have been updated. A committee will be reviewing and updating the Guidelines for event rentals of the church and parish hall.

Discussion continues regarding potential uses for the vacant land on the northeast corner of the church property. Bids are being sought for an updated appraisal of the property.

Fr. Brian reported that there will be another Parish Forum, Sunday, June 29th as part of the Coffee Hour. Look for more information about this opportunity to hear from the Vestry and various ministries.

The additions to the liturgy during Lent, new special prayers and the gospel read in Spanish and English, were positively received. The special prayers will continue to be part of the regular worship time and Fr. Brian will be seeking more bilingual volunteers to read the Spanish.

Fr. Brian and Rev'd Karen Matthews conducted training of Lay Eucharistic Ministers and Visitors, April 26th. Attendees included members from San Andreas, Sonora, Lodi, and Modesto. Several members have indicated they want to serve as acolytes.

Senior Warden, Joyce Bell, reported that she will be forming groups to handle hospitality needs: coffee hour, greeters, and welcoming newcomers. Changes may include rearranging the church entrance to make it more “welcoming”.

Deacon Greg reported that he has been blessed to be part of the Shower Shuttle ministry coordinated by Judy Thorkelson. That ministry is benefiting from the generous donations to the Yellow Bag program. He has been blessed to see the monthly food distribution, chaired by Judy Teter, in action. It was reported that the group, Indefensible Stanislaus, will be using the parish hall for their monthly meetings.

Junior Warden, Peter Krewko, reported on bids to have an updated assessment of our campus. It was approved to accept the bid from Elite Home and Commercial Property Inspection. He will coordinate with the company to have the inspection completed soon.

Stewardship Chair, Courtney Smith reported that she will be using the Diocesan approved and funded “TENS” program for the Stewardship Campaign. She anticipates using the same format that was used in 2024.



Bishop David with Gabe, Jose, Alex and Ally

Palm Sunday and Confirmation



Diane with the flowered cross



Gabe, Alley, Jose and Alex



Fr. Brian and Dcn. Greg

1:31 PM
05/15/25
Cash Basis

St Paul's Episcopal Church

Profit & Loss

April 2025

	Apr 25
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
Operating Income	
A · Pledge & Plate Offerings	
4000.0 · Sunday Plate Donations	436.00
4000.1 · Faith Pledges	13,406.50
4000.3 · Holiday	410.00
Total A · Pledge & Plate Offerings	14,252.50
C · Rental & Fundraising Income	
4100.0 · Facility Use & Deposits	537.45
4100.2 · School Rent	6,000.00
Total C · Rental & Fundraising Income	6,537.45
D · Other Operating Income	
4200.0 · Rector Discretionary Fund	200.00
Total D · Other Operating Income	200.00
F · Restricted/Designated Offeri	
Designated Offerings	
4300.0 · Altar Guild Flowers	280.00
4300.06 · Music	600.00
4300.08 · Capital	140.00
Total Designated Offerings	1,020.00
Pass Through Income	
4403- Other Charitable Outreach	135.00
4400.0 · Bishop Donations	177.00
4400.3 · Interfaith Ministries	72.00
4400.6 · Other Outreach	2,034.15
Total Pass Through Income	2,418.15
Total F · Restricted/Designated Offeri	3,438.15
Total Operating Income	24,428.10
Total Income	24,428.10
Gross Profit	24,428.10
Expense	
Expenditures	
H. Outreach Expenses	
Designated Offerings	
5203.00 · Altar Guild Flower Exp.	119.88
5204.00 · Altar Guild Supply Exp.	128.24
5208 · Hospitality (Event Supplies)	
5208.10 · Coffee Hour	41.35
Total 5208 · Hospitality (Event Supplies)	41.35
5210 · Fundraiser- St. Paul Exp.	
5210.70 · Other Fundraiser Expenses	106.01
Total 5210 · Fundraiser- St. Paul Exp.	106.01
5211 · Funeral Expense	889.73
5214 · Music Expense	125.00
Total Designated Offerings	1,410.21

1:31 PM
05/15/25
Cash Basis

St Paul's Episcopal Church

Profit & Loss

April 2025

	Apr 25
Pass Through Expense	
5400.0 · Bishop Donations	352.00
5400.2 · Food in Faith	92.00
5400.8 · Other Outreach	255.00
Total Pass Through Expense	699.00
Restricted Gifts Expenses	
5314 · Special Gifts	0.00
Total Restricted Gifts Expenses	0.00
Total H. Outreach Expenses	2,109.21
Operating Expenses	
Administration Expense	
#1 Priest In-Charge	
5100.00 · Rector Payroll Expense	6,391.96
Total #1 Priest In-Charge	6,391.96
3 Office Administration	
5150 · Music Director Payroll	600.00
5170 · Fed. Payroll Taxes Exp.	0.00
5171 · State Payroll Taxes Exp.	0.00
5172 · FICA Expense	0.00
5173 · FICA-St. Paul's Expense	45.90
Total 3 Office Administration	645.90
Diocese Expense	
5000 · Diocese Assessment	982.20
Total Diocese Expense	982.20
Maintenance	
5009.12 · Parish Hall Major Repairs	472.19
5016.22 · Capital Improvement	2,000.00
Total Maintenance	2,472.19
Office Expenses	
5030 · Computer Programs	467.95
5031 · Office Supplies	751.00
5032 · Office Equip Purchase/Repair	358.36
5034.00 · Office Expense Other	803.00
5035.00 · Bank Fees Expense	35.00
Total Office Expenses	2,415.31
Public Relations Expense	
5041 · Advertising	525.00
Total Public Relations Expense	525.00
Services Expense	
5050 · Alarm Expense	233.22
5051 · Cleaning Service Expense	1,004.26
5053 · Gardening Expense	1,080.00
5054 · Payroll Service Expense	19.60
5056 · Property Insurance Exp.	2,514.68
5061 · Security	1,178.00
Total Services Expense	6,029.76

St Paul's Episcopal Church
Profit & Loss
April 2025

	Apr25
Utilities Expense	
5070 • Telephone Expense	343.70
5073 • Utility/Electricity Exp.	907.11
5074 • Utility/Garbage Expense	288.68
5075 • Utility/Natural Gas Exp.	311.82
5076 • Utility/ Water & Sewer	799.31
5077 • Utility/Solar Expense	1,091.94
Total Utilities Expense	3,742.56
Total Administration Expense	23,204.88
Total Operating Expenses	23,204.88
Total Expenditures	25,314.09
69810 • Bank Service Charges	27.72
Total Expense	25,341.81
Net Ordinary Income	-913.71
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	
4106 • Interest Income	342.54
Total Other Income	342.54
Net Other Income	342.54
Net Income	-571.17

Coming Events

June 8 - The Feast of Pentecost

On Pentecost we will be celebrating the mission of the Church and commissioning our Eucharistic Ministers. Eucharistic Visitors, Acolytes and others.

Following the service, we will have a festive coffee hour outside on the lawn.

That weekend is also the American Graffiti Festival in Modesto, so maybe dress appropriately!!

Pastoral Care at St Paul's

As Fr Brian has mentioned in recent sermons, some work has been underway reviewing and updating our approach to pastoral care in the parish. The results of this will be included in the upcoming May/June edition of The Epistle. If anyone has any questions or comments Fr Brian is always happy to hear them.

June 29-Fifth Sunday Parish Forum

Mark your calendars for June 29th - our next Parish Forum. This is your chance to hear about ministries, what the Vestry members are doing, and plans for our future together.

June Ministry Schedule

Dates	June 1 st	June 8 th	June 15 th	June 22 nd	June 29 th
Clergy	Fr. Brian	Fr. Brian	Fr. Brian	Fr. Brian	Fr. Brian
Acolytes	Judy T. Nancy S. Gabe T.	Nancy S. Joyce B. Evelyn	Judy T. Jim P.	Nancy S. Gabe T. Carlos M.	Judy T. Nancy S. Alex S.
Eucharistic Minister	Linda L.	Sarah H.	Stephanie G.	Joyce B. Sarah H.	
Lectors	Judy T. Linda L.	Stephanie H-W. Joyce B.	Stephanie G. Barbara V.	Stephanie H-W. Linda L.	Alex S. Nancy S.
Intercessor	Ishmael H.	Nancy S.	Peter K.	Lora B.	Joyce B.
Ushers	Claudine R. Phil M.	Carolyn L. David L.	David L. Ishmael H.	Greg B. Carolyn L.	Claudine R. Phil M.
Greeters	Claudine R. Phil M.	Carolyn L. Lynelle H.	Ishmael H. David L.	Greg B. Carolyn L.	Claudine R. Phil M.
Vestry Rep.	Ishmael H.	Nancy S.	Peter K.	Lora B.	Joyce B.



Bishop David with confirmands and family

Celebrating Birthdays in May



May 2025 Birthdays	
Alexandria Cassagio	May 1
Evelyn Bolig	May 9
Charlotte DeHart	May 9
Nancy Silva	May 11
Louisa Bryant	May 22
Charles Palmer	May 22
Danielle Verges	May 22



May 2025 Wedding Anniversaries	
Charles and Nancy Harrison	May 11
Nancy Silva and Norm VanSpronsen	May 25

June Birthdays



June Birthdays	
Stephanie Gilmer	June 2
Calvin Verges	June 3
Carolyn List	June 4
Alex Sarina	June 5
Ginny Munroe	June 8
Alexander Su	June 14
Issac Su	June 14
Paige Cano	June 16
Samantha Bland	June 18
Rossana Tamimi	June 19
Ann Marie Lorentz	June 20
Fr. Brian Dawson	June 20
Ed Bearden	June 24
Chris Verges	June 28

June Anniversaries



June Wedding Anniversaries	
June-Mike and Pam Cox	June 23
Tom Hampson and Hennie Van Konynenburg	June 29
Gayle and Murray Ivy,	June 29

CARING FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

If you've been in church over the past month you will have heard me talking about sheep and shepherds and stressing that caring for each other is the responsibility of us all, not just a select few. 'Pastoral Care' (as we usually term it) is often thought to involve things like hospital visits, home communions and looking after people in times of crisis and challenge, which is true of course. But while Pastoral Care is about such times, it's also about the simple acts of looking out for each other, keeping in touch and ensuring that all our people know they are cared about and for. It's about family, and family looks after each other.

Over the past few months, I have been looking at how our caring for each other is structured and carried out. We are truly blessed at St Paul's to have some extraordinary people who have carried this responsibility for many years. It's time, however, to share that load more equitably. So, in that spirit we are establishing a model of care that attempts to (a) ensure we are all carrying the load, and (b) reaches out to all of us regularly. That model and a brief explanation of it are included here so that we can all be aware of how it works and what the expectations are for each of us. The model includes all the traditional Pastoral Care approaches (what I have called 'Intentional or Formal Pastoral Care') as well as the less formal but in many ways even more important caring we all do for and with one another. A key person in this model is the Pastoral Care Coordinator who, along with Deacon Greg and myself, provides the vital link between all the different activities and personnel. I am delighted that Stephanie Gilmer has agreed to take up this role. In many ways Stephanie has been doing this for years, but the intention here is to ensure she is not doing it all. So, we also have a dedicated team of Eucharistic Visitors and over coming weeks and months we will be ensuring that the load is shared across that team. We will also set up a new team who will regularly keep in contact with all our parish by phone. Working with our Senior Warden, Joyce Bell, there will also be some deliberate work done to create links and contacts with new parishioners and visitors. I am incredibly grateful for all those who have stepped forward to assist. If these sound like things you want to be involved with please reach out to Stephanie, Joyce or myself. We would love to have your help.

On that note, as discussed at our Parish Forum in March (the next one is coming up on June 29 by the way), we have Working Groups being established, and they all need members. As noted, Joyce Bell is working on newcomers' ministries and also hospitality (think Coffee Hour and ways that we make people feel welcome). Peter Krewko, our Junior Warden, need people interested in the church property and grounds. Courtney Smith chairs our Stewardship and Fundraising Working Group and would welcome people interested in that vital ministry. Then there's the Altar Guild, Eucharistic

Ministers, Acolytes, Lectors, Bell Ringers, Choir and much more. Please, get involved if you can. It's about us all and takes us all to be God's People in this place.

On the Feast of Pentecost (June 8) we will be licensing and commissioning people into some of our more formal ministries, but it will also be a commissioning of sorts for us all. I hope to see you there. In the meantime, as always, if you have comments, questions or concerns I am always happy to talk.

Grace and Peace to all God's People

Brian+

Salvation Army Shelter Dinners



The Salvation Army Shelter Dinner Team, in their bi-monthly ministry, planned and served dinner, Sunday, May 18th. The menu included Hot Chicken Salad (casserole with chopped chicken, rice, peas, hard-boiled eggs, and cheese), cole slaw, rolls, sliced peaches, chocolate chip cookies, and milk.

The Team will be preparing and serving dinner in July, September, and November this year. The menu varies according to available ingredients. We welcome suggestions, help with planning, contributing ingredients, cooking and serving. Some parts of the meal can be prepared at home and assembled at church, some parts are best assembled at church just prior to taking the meal to the shelter.

Contact Linda Lowe, 209-496-3937, with any questions or if you are willing to help in any way.



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Executive Director

Eileen Spencer

4/28/2025

**The Rev. Brian Dawson
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
1528 Oakdale Road
Modesto, CA 95355**

Dear Brian,

Thank you for St. Paul's Episcopal Church's donation of \$255.00 to the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem given on 04/23/2025, in support of the area of greatest need.

The humanitarian institutions within the Diocese of Jerusalem deliver critical, life-saving services, and your contribution has a profound effect on the well-being of the most vulnerable residents of the Holy Land. Because of your organization's generous support, our affiliate institutions can continue to provide essential services and programs, fostering positive change and resilience.

Your gift is a testament to your compassion and commitment to our mission, and we are deeply grateful for your partnership. Together, we are working towards a brighter and more hopeful future for those in need. Thank you for being a part of the AFEDJ family.

With gratitude,

**Eileen Spencer
Executive Director**



Prayer and Praise

May 5, 2025

Remember those who have asked for our prayers

Annamary	Deacon George	Paige	Susan	Robin
Priscella	Loretta	Bonnie	Ishmael	Michael
Clare	Howard	Brett	Mary	Bob
JoHanna	Bill	Hannah	Ken	Akasha
Elo	Mike	Susan	Katharine	Ginny
Keith	Cheri	Laurance	JoAnne	Linda
Saybel	Daniel	Manuel	Devika	Marissas
Cammie	Roy	Judy		

Those who have been called back to God

Elaine Paradis
Mary Kinnaman
Janet Rhodes
Rodger Antonio Arancibia
Olga Lorenzetti
Susan Tupper

Those in the Military

1LT Sam Birch, Army
LTC Nathaniel P. Wallace, Air Force
CPT Jenavieve Campbell, Air Force
CPT Fred Campbell, Air Force
PO 1st Class Johnny Olmos, US Coast Guard
SGT Carson Repan, USAF

Special Prayers

The Clergy, Vestry, and Wardens

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Vestry Meeting Minutes

April 27, 2025

Members Present: Joyce Bell (Sr. Warden), Fr. Brian Dawson, Courtney Smith, Chuck Sheaffer, Lora Burnett, Luis Martinez, Nancy Silva, Anne Mootz, Peter Krewko (Jr. Warden)

Others Present: Dc. Greg Masztal, Rex Adamson, Leo Champaign, Jose Cruz, Greg Burnett (Treasurer), Carolyn List (Vestry Clerk)

Call to Order: 12:00pm

Opening

Apologies for Absences: Sarah Hartmann, Ismael Huggins

In Memorium: Mary Kinnaman

Declarations of Conflict of Interest: None

Respectful Conversations: Read by Nancy Silva.

New Business

Possible Sister Church Relationship: Rex Adamson.

Proposal to initiate a sister church relationship with Christ's Church in Kiev, an Anglican Church within the Diocese of Europe. Services are held in St. Catherine's German Lutheran Church. Parishioners include US and other nation's embassy employees who are Anglican/Episcopal. A sister church relationship could consist of simply incorporating the parish into each others prayers or sending letters, or could grow to exchanging visits.

If this is pursued, a working group would be needed to coordinate the relationship.

Additional information will be gathered on the logistics of entering into a sister church relationship and this will be discussed again at the May meeting.

Approval of Minutes – February 2025

Error noted on page 2 in "3. Sell the Property" where there are 2 articles before word "separate".

M/S to approve: N. Silva / L. Burnett. Approved

Matters Arising

a. Vestry Membership – to co-opt or not

At the Annual Meeting in January, the Parish voted to increase Vestry membership from 9 to 11, but only 10 currently serve on Vestry. The Vestry may co-opt someone to fill this empty seat for the remainder of the year, after which they may run for a 3-year term. There is no option for a special election in this Diocese. Fr. Brian noted that this allows newer members to “test” if they would like to continue and adds additional voices to decision making. He will follow up with individuals who have indicated interest.

b. Safeguarding Training – has everyone completed their modules?

Most believe they have completed their required modules. Cn Anna returns shortly and will provide a list to Stephanie Gilmer indicating who has officially completed the required Safeguarding modules

c. Vacant Lot conversation update – Appraisal?

Fr. Brian advised that since the Vestry discussion about the triangle property at the February meeting, that in addition to the city of Modesto, several private groups have approached him about the use of the property, however, no written proposal has been offered.

Fr. Brian has consulted with Niniv Tamimi, who highly recommends getting an updated appraisal on this property.

Dc. Greg noted that the Chancellor has indicated that funds from the sale of a property would be invested in the DFMS Episcopal fund. The interest could be used by St. Paul’s for operational expenses.

Fr. Brian advised that there seems to be little interest in buying for commercial interests and most want to do some kind of transitional housing. Selling might allow us to divest of the responsibility to upkeep the roads.

Motion to have a new property appraisal on the triangle property done:

M/S C. Sheaffer / L. Burnett. Approved

d. Facility Use Agreements:

There is a need to update our Facility Use Agreement, as we are getting requests to rent our space. Previously we had a paid event planner to be present during rentals.. Volunteers will be needed to be present during rentals, and when feasible, ongoing renters may receive an access card allowing access , similar to the Tai Chi agreement. J. Bell and L. Burnett volunteered to update this agreement. They will report back with an update.

Rector’s Report

- a. **Parish Forum** was well attended on March's 5th Sunday. Dc. Greg's Diocese finance presentation was well received. Future Forums will be limited to one presentation.
- b. Fr. Brian noted that families with children are increasing. Matthew and Jamie's baby Atlas will be baptized in May.
- c. **Updated Funeral / Memorial Policy & Fees -- one change** Parishioner services will still have use of the church and facilities free of charge, but the church cannot provide personnel and pay for catered receptions. The hall be made available at no cost and the family will be encouraged to seek an outside caterer.
Mary Kinnaman's service will be Saturday May 3 at 1pm. Coffee and cookies will be provided.
- d. **Lenten liturgical offerings** Parishioners indicated they liked the new prayers for birthdays and celebrations. Vestry consensus is to continue these.
Spanish readings were generally well received with only one unfavorable comment. Additional individuals who can read in Spanish are needed to continue.
- e. **Lay training:** Training for eucharistic ministers and visitors, on 4/26, attended by parishioners from Modesto, San Andreas, Sonora, and Lodi, went well. A second training will be offered in May at ECCO. Fr. Brian will officiate.
Several new members have indicated they wish to train as acolytes.
- f. **Layout of Vestry Agenda:** The agenda is presented following the STRAND format allowing areas covered by one coordinator to be covered together. The finance reports are also being reworked so that they present expenses in a STRAND format.
- g. **On line services:** Facebook keeps a service on line for only 30 days. Several parishioners only attend on-line, coming in-person only for special events.
Discussion indicated that with the current political environment, this is a sufficient amount of time as this prevents someone from attempting to interfere with church activities. Discussion considered if a special only on-line service is appropriate.

STRAND REPORTS

Hospitality:

- a. **Coffee Hour, Greeters, New-comers' follow up:** J. Bell. Preparations are being made to gather work groups for these issues. One consideration is to re-organize the Narthex to better greet and recognize newcomers so they are not lost in the shuffle when they arrive.
Announcements could be made at coffee hour to invite new-comers to Vestry meetings. Special events should also be announced with the pre-service announcements as well as written in the bulletins. Fr. Brian noted that the Good

Friday service was rescheduled from 10am to 12noon, but several still showed up at 10am.

P. Krewko suggested publishing announcements in the Peace Live Center community newspaper as a welcoming venue.

- b. **Other considerations: Outreach.** St. Paul's and the Episcopal Church's "All are Welcome" has created an accepting environment for individuals, like migrants, but appreciated particularly by the LGBTQ community who often don't feel welcome at other churches. St. Paul's regularly attends the annual MoPride picnic and has provided facilities for meetings for LGBTQ parents, Halloween Party Drag Shows, & MoPride Proms. L. Martinez noted that the DEI limits has required adjustments in social services programs to meet the new guidelines for what may be funded with federal funds.

Solidarity: Dc. Greg.

Dc. Greg noted that since his retirement he has been attending the various missions that St. Paul's is involved in, like the monthly Salvation Army food commodities distribution and homeless shelter meals. He noted the commodities are efficient with undistributed foods saved for the dinners and also provided to Hazel's Pre-School which serves a number of subsidized child care programs for low income and military families.

His next mission will be to attend the Interfaith Council

- a. **Shower Shuttle** Judy Thorkelson coordinates St. Paul's contributions to this program which has 2 buses converted to shower stalls and one for laundry services. St. Paul's provides necessary bathing supplies and clothing for clients. He advised that many participants work but live in their cars or even have homes but cannot afford utilities. He noted that he recently found \$10 new men's shirts at Costco, buying a number, and was amazed at the delight of those receiving them.
- b. **Yellow Bags** The Bishop has reinstituted the yellow-bag program, providing bags to be filled with the items similar to those needed by the shower shuttle. He feels this is a best way to distribute them rather than a "St. Paul's project". He noted that Jesus said 'Whatever you do for the least of us, you do for me'
- c. **Indefensible Stanislaus** This is a political group who has requested to rent the Parish Hall monthly to meet with local congressmen and assembly members. A recent first meeting was an "empty chair town hall", providing a chair for absent Congressman McClintock, who has stopped meeting with his constituents. There were 110 people at the last meeting. It is somewhat left leaning politically so St. Paul's is taking a cautious approach. They must pay rent and they may not use partisan signage.

Family

a. Property Assessment – Bids P. Krewko

The Jr. Warden has solicited bids for a commercial building inspector to evaluate the church buildings and property to estimate potential maintenance and repair needs. This will allow for a timeline and budget preparations over the next several years.

Three bids were received and all solicitors were reviewed.

1. Christian Cobian - \$1,200.
2. Don Singleton - \$4,800
3. Elite Home & Commercial Property Inspection - \$4,545

P. Krewko noted that he liked the bid from Elite Inspections. It provided the most detailed information and included all buildings. Inspection would take 2 days.

We will coordinate with Hazel's for an appropriate time for the inspector to access that space.

Motion to accept Elite Inspections to provide building inspection

M/S Fr. B. Dawson / N. Silva. Approved

b. Stewardship – Fundraising C. Smith

We will likely follow the same format as 2024. It was successful and pledges received were better than in the several previous years. Various Internal and External ministries were highlighted with speakers presenting and inviting participation. The duration of the marketing was 5 weeks between 2 Feast days: St. Francis' blessing of the animals and All Saints Day (El Dia de los Muertos). This was augmented by weekly phone calls, email, bulletin announcements, and the ministry speakers.

C. Smith noted that when marketing, individuals need to hear about the issue at least 7 times, using communication at different levels. Timing is important if we wish to have the gathering on the lawn that was successful last year. Plus, continuity is important, like using the same Feast days each year.

We will again use the TENS network which provides the theme and suggestions. It is provided and paid for by the Diocese.

The goal is to increase membership, increase pledges, and increase participation in ministries by highlighting them. We need to decide which ministries to highlight in 2025.

- c. **Pastoral Care (see rector's report)**

Finance

- a. **February 2025 Profit and Loss Statement** no questions nor concerns expressed
Motion to Approve February P&L statement for Audit
M/S A. Mootz / C. Smith. Approved
- b. **March 2025 Profit and Loss Statement** Fr. Brian noted that the March balance was negative by about \$4,000 of expected pledges / income over expenses. The majority of the negative balance in March, totaling \$21,597, was due to the replacement of the Parish Hall sidewalk. This was paid out of funds received in January specifically for building maintenance and improvement but shows in the March accounts when paid.
Motion to Approve March P&L statement for Audit
M/S Fr. B. Dawson / P. Krewko. Approved
- c. **Other financial concerns.**
N. Silva advised that often individuals who do their Required Minimum Distributions from their retirement IRAs donate later in the year. This helps to have a positive income at the end of the year.
Fr. Brian noted that the school lease contract will be up for renewal next year and negotiations will include utility charges plus rent.

New Business none

Closing Blessing

Meeting Adjourned: 2:24pm

Next Meeting: Thursday May 22, 6:30pm Zoom



St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Pastoral Team

Fr. Brian Dawson.....209-897-1612.....FrBrianDawson@gmail.com

Archdeacon Emeritus George Cano

Deacon Greg Masztal.....deacongreg66@outlook.com

Parish Administrator

Linda Lowe: 209-522-3267stpaulsmodestoca@gmail.com

Other Important Contacts

Music Director, Chuck Sheaffercbshea@pacbell.net

Hand Bells, Judy Teterjlpt@sbcglobal.net

Prayer Chain.....stpaulsmodestoca@gmail.com

St. Paul's Epistle & Bulletin, Cherie Sheaffer.....cbshea@pacbell.net

Social Media, Deacon Greg Masztaldeacongreg66@outlook.com

Finance Committee, Carolyn Listcarolynlist@sbcglobal.net

Stewardship Campaign, Courtney Smithcourtneyvsmith@gmail.com

Praesidium AcademyStephanie Gilmer

Vestry

Senior Warden: Joyce Bell (215) 275-6502bellj1@charter.net

Junior Warden: Peter Krewko (707) 853-3604pmkjfc@att.net

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

