



St. Paul's Epistle

OCTOBER 2020

Dear Beloveds,

We are in extraordinary times. And... I have a confession to make. Each month as I prepare to write for the newsletter, I am reminded how fuzzy my brain is...How difficult it is for me to put thoughts on paper...to offer pastoral words to feed your souls. Thus, I have offered other people's words.

Maybe you can relate to *fuzzy brain*. This too shall pass. What will not pass...is Jesus' loving compassion and presence every step of the way. Whether in fuzziness, fog, fear, grief, exhaustion, joy, wonder and laughter. God is here.

Let us remember that as scattered as we may be, we are one in our prayer. May we continue to pray together. Perhaps these prayers for our 1979 Book of Common Prayer will offer you bread for the journey.

Yours in Christ,
Sherry+

62. A Prayer attributed to St. Francis p. 833

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. *Amen.*

28. In Times of Conflict p. 824

O God, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

7. For the Church p. 816

Gracious Father, we pray for thy holy Catholic Church. Fill it with all truth, in all truth with all peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in any thing it is amiss, reform it. Where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in want, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son our Savior. *Amen*

24. For an Election p. 822

Almighty God, to whom we must account for all our powers and privileges: Guide the people of the United States (*or of this community*) in the election of officials and representatives; that, by faithful administration and wise laws, the rights of all may be protected and our nation be enabled to fulfill your purposes; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

22. For Sound Government pp 821-22

O Lord our Governor, bless the leaders of our land, that we may be a people at peace among ourselves and a blessing to other nations of the earth.
Lord, keep this nation under your care.

To the President and members of the Cabinet, to Governors of States, Mayors of Cities, and to all in administrative authority, grant wisdom and grace in the exercise of their duties.
Give grace to your servants, O Lord.

To Senators and Representatives, and those who make our laws in States, Cities, and Towns, give courage, wisdom, and foresight to provide for the needs of all our people, and to fulfill our obligations in the community of nations.
Give grace to your servants, O Lord.

To the Judges and officers of our Courts give understanding and integrity, that human rights may be safeguarded and justice served.
Give grace to your servants, O Lord.

And finally, teach our people to rely on your strength and to accept their responsibilities to their fellow citizens, that they may elect trustworthy leaders and make wise decisions for the well-being of our society; that we may serve you faithfully in our generation and honor your holy Name.

*For yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as
head above all. Amen.*

59. For Quiet Confidence p. 832

O God of peace, *who hast* taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength: By the might of *thy* Spirit lift us, we pray *thee*, to *thy* presence, where we may be still and know that *thou art* God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Hello people of St. Paul's,

As we continue our work of being the church outside of our buildings, please find below some updates from your vestry as well as some changes to our weekly Zoom services:

- Beginning in October two to three Sundays a month our 9:30am Zoom service will be lay led Morning Prayer Rite 2 from the Book of Common Prayer. Two Sundays a month Rev. Sherry will officiate the 9:30am Zoom service using Morning Prayer from *Enriching Our Worship*, an Episcopal supplemental liturgical resource, or a similar service. The Zoom link on our homepage will still be used to join all of these services.
- The vestry will be attending a Mutual Ministry Review Zoom retreat led by the Rev. Angie Emerson via Zoom on October 20, 2020. This is an opportunity to dig in to what the vestry feels is working and what might need attention. It is a time to come together and prayerfully refresh as a team to help keep what we're all doing as a congregation at St. Paul's vibrant and meaningful.
- As you all know, St. Paul's is in transition since Rev. Alan Kittelson, retired last August. We are very fortunate and grateful for the interim leadership of our pastor Rev. Sherry Osborn and our deacon Rev. Lucy Pellegrini, especially during these extremely trying times. But we are in a ministry discernment time, and as your vestry formalizes these next early discernment steps, we need all of you to pray about what St. Paul's means to you and what you hope it to be in the future. Soon your vestry will be sending out a document to read, ponder and pray over. An invitation to reflect, respond and be part of the discernment discussion, to help St. Paul's move forward together. Stay tuned!

Peace & Blessings,

Rebecca, Sr. Warden, 802-578-7312

FAITH-FILLED GENEROSITY

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1

This year has challenged everyone's faith. Many have experienced illness, death, hope and hopelessness, hunger, and loneliness along with too much violent evidence of the frailties of humankind. However, the people of St. Paul's stayed strong and met these adversities head-on.

Immediately a Food Train was set up to support the needs of the Vergennes Food Shelf, the Restart Ministry Team was set up to meet Diocesan Covid-19 guidelines. A phone ministry was started to check in on people and their needs. The Sunday school children, happy to be outdoors, decorated rocks and hung signs of support for Black Lives Matter, peace, and justice. The garden was well tended and the backdrop of our beautifully restored windows await our return. Our congregation was able to stay in touch via the Episcopal Café on Zoom for worship and fellowship as our church buildings have been closed. In the midst of the pandemic, St. Paul's has still been able to make financial contributions to several community organizations. And for our own relief, St. Paul's applied for and was granted money from the PPP which helped us continue to pay expenses. As people are able, pledges continue to come in, and we appreciate all that means for St. Paul's financial health. We are very grateful for this output of time, talent, and treasure!

This fall, the Episcopal Network for Stewardship (TENS) is offering a program that will bring us joy and encouragement as we try to wrestle with all that has entered our lives in 2020. We will be introducing "Faith-Filled Generosity" over four Sundays beginning October 18th through Nov 8th with members of the stewardship committee presenting readings and leading discussions. Ingathering of our faith-gifts will be November 15th. We may or may not be physically gathering but our Zoom connection will continue. Visit the Zoom link on our website: www.saintpaulsvergennes.org.

Many members of St. Paul's have been steadfast in their commitment to keeping our family together. Under the guidance of our Interim Pastor, The Rev. Sherry Osborn and assisted by our Senior Warden, Rebecca Chauvin, and our Deacon, Lucy Pellegrini, we have been able to worship, laugh, cry, sing and tell our stories every Sunday since the church has been closed. Hopefully, we will reopen very soon so we can see each other in person. As we navigate all of our transitions, we feel confident that St. Paul's remains a warm and welcoming place for all.

In faith with gratitude.

Stewardship committee: Bo Price, Bob Laidman, Sarah Cowan, Chris Hale, Madelaine Calise

6-Month Wall

by Dr. Aisha Ahmad

*Thank you to Mary Pratt who shared this with me.
I used it as part of my homily on Sunday, Sept. 27, 2020
~ Rev. Sherry*

The 6-month mark in any sustained crisis is always difficult. We have all adjusted to this “new normal” but might now feel like we’re running out of steam. Yet, at best, we are only 1/3 of the way through this marathon. How can we keep going?

First, in my experience, this is a very normal time to struggle or slump. I **always** hit a wall 6 months into a tough assignment in a disaster zone. The desire to “get away” or “make it stop” is intense. I’ve done this many times, and at 6 months, it’s like clockwork.

This time, our crisis is global and there’s nowhere to run. That’s OK. I’ve had to power through the 6-month hump before and there is life on the other side. Right now, it feels like we are looking ahead at a long, dark, wintry tunnel. But it’s not going to be like that.

Rather, this is our next major adaptation phase. We’ve already relearned how to do groceries, host meetings, and even teach classes. And we have found new ways to be happy and have fun. But as the days get shorter and colder, we need to be ready to innovate again.

This is my first pandemic, but not my first 6-month wall. So, what can I share to help you? First, the wall is normal. And frankly, it’s not productive to try to ram your head through it. It will break naturally in about 4-6 weeks if you ride it out.

Of course, there are things we have to do. Work. Teach. Cook. Exercise. But just don’t expect to be sparkingly happy or wildly creative in the middle of your wall. Right now, if you can meet your obligations and be kind to your loved ones, you get an A+.

Also, don’t be afraid that your happiness and creativity are gone for the rest of this marathon. Not true. I assure you that it will soon break, and you will hit a new stride. But today, roll with it. Clear away less challenging projects. Read a novel. Download that meditation app.

Frankly, even though we cannot physically leave this disaster zone, try to give yourself a mental or figurative “shore leave.” Short mental escapes can offer respite and distance from the everyday struggle. Take more mental “leave” until you clear the wall.

In my experience, this 6-month wall both arrives and dissipates like clockwork. So I don’t fight it anymore. I don’t beat myself up over it. I just know that it will happen and trust that the dip will pass. In the meantime, I try to support my mental and emotional health.

Take heart. We have navigated a harrowing global disaster for 6 months, with resourcefulness and courage. We have already found new ways to live, love, and be happy under these rough conditions. A miracle and a marvel! This is hard proof that we have what it takes to keep going.

So, dear friends, do not despair of the 6-month wall. It's not permanent, nor will it define you in this period of adversity. Trust that the magic that helped you through the first phase is still there. Take a breath and a pause. You'll be on the other side in no time.

Written by Dr. Aisha Ahmad, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto, the Director of the Islam and Global Affairs Initiative and a Senior Researcher of the Global Justice Lab at the Munk School of Global Affairs, and the Chair of the Board of Directors of Women in International Security-Canada. She is currently a Senior Fellow at Massey College and a Fellow at Trinity College.



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

1st	Tim Earle	10th	Jack Devine
2nd	Connor Merrill	13th	Charlotte Macauley
3rd	Benjamin Hale	18th	Connelly S Leggett
3rd	Thatcher Leggett	19th	Andrew Woods
4th	Keegan Tierney	20th	Kelsey Tierney
5th	Judy Woods	21st	Rumsey Torrey
6th	Bruce Cassidy	23rd	Seth Cowan
7th	Josh Jennings	25th	Karen White
8th	Heather Byrnes	26th	Carrie Wells
8th	Sarah White	27th	Caitlin Curtis
9th	Lindsey Jennings	29th	Shirley McClay

Interim Pastor: Rev. Sherry Osborn
revsherryo@gmail.com

Deacon: Rev. Lucy Pellegrini

Sr. Warden: Rebecca Chauvin 578-7312

Jr. Warden: Chris Hale 877-1059

Clerk of the Vestry: Steve Lowe 877-3783

VESTRY MEMBERS:

Class of 2021:

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Nan Guilmette 453-8515

Kim Hatgen 877-6947

Class of 2022:

David Merrill 475-2160

Bo Price 877-2031

Class of 2023:

Chris Hale 877-1059

Jeff Mangini 453-2144

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