

Deadline to submit articles for "The Epistle" is the 15th of each month.

Summer Office Hours

Mon-Thurs • 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. & Fri • 9 a.m. - noon

Aug 4 • 5:30 p.m. • Rising 6th graders & parents

Aug 10 • 11:30 a.m. • Worship Committee meeting

Aug 15 • 5:15 p.m. • Vestry Meeting

Connection Over Convenience

I love convenience. I love efficiency. I love exerting as little effort as humanly possible doing the mundane tasks of life. We live in a world that is more convenient than ever with digitized technology that gives us robotic vacuum cleaners and kitty litter boxes. Think of all of the time and energy we save by choosing the path of least resistance! Does anyone else revel in the instant gratification of the "Buy with 1-Click" button? I know I do. That's why the following quote stopped me in my tracks when I saw it on social media:

"Churches don't need to be Amazon. We need to move away from focusing on convenience and move towards connection and real relationships."

We only have so much time and energy in a given day, so it's perfectly understandable we use convenience as a barometer for decision making. But is it possible that we can get stuck in a cycle of convenience? What are we missing out on by constantly choosing ease and convenience?

I believe we lose depth in connections and relationships. Sure, I can text my friend throughout the day, but that's

never the same as calling them on the phone or sitting down for a face-to-face conversation. I can watch sermons online, but it can't replace the experience of gathering together with other Christians to worship together. Relationships require time and intentionality. Relationships take work to develop and nurture. This applies to our relationships with our family, friends and God. These relationships can grow shallow if we choose to show up only when it's convenient.

This month, I invite you to join me in considering ways we can be more intentional in how we connect with God and others. If you want spend more time with God in prayer, I commend to you the "Daily Devotions for Individuals and Families" on pages 136-140 in the Book of Common Prayer. If you want to connect more with your St.Paul's family, I invite you to "sit and stay a while" with us between services for coffee hour and formation.

We build relationships by showing up and being present. So let's choose connection over convenience!

—Katie

Last week I was walking into Lowe's from the parking lot when I heard, "Hey man, Look out!" just in time to catch a shopping cart headed right for me. When I looked up, a man was trying to hand me an unopened KJV of the Bible. "No thank you" I said, finally realizing what was happening.

After I walked inside, I thought to myself "Darn, he was evangelizing and I didn't know it. Pretty smooth. I wish I told him I didn't need one because I already have a dozen... and that we read the NRSV in our tradition... or that I half a dozen prayer books, or whatever else I could have said but I didn't... or if it would matter anyway."

Evangelism and Episcopalians don't go in a sentence very often, do they? I imagine most of us probably aren't called to toss shopping carts, knock on doors, hold up signs on Highway 39 or wait downtown to talk to people about Jesus.

But we are called to "proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ," and "share Christ's unconditional love with the broader community." The first is our promise at baptism. The second is the only part of our St. Paul's mission statement I have memorized. Both of these statements are talking about evangelism.

I wonder if many of the pressures of evangelism come from fear. We are afraid of rejection, vulnerability and fear that churches are shrinking. We need more people in the pews... clergy, go get us more young families.

So, what do we do? Tell our story. In my experience, this is the most authentic kind of evangelism. We all have stories to tell about how we experience God's loving presence in our lives even if it is small. In fact, Matthew

talks about the kingdom in small things. Mustard seeds, leaven and hidden treasures for instance.

And then the other kind of evangelism we can do is love. "And they'll know that we're Christians by our love" as the song from camp goes. It is in how we love that sets Christians apart. Episcopalians thrive and are formed for this kind of Evangelism.

So, church... St. Paul's, I invite you to share our story and love in action. Seek out the kingdom in our schools, work, at home and in our church. Proclaim and witness the love of God because

we have experienced it, even if it is as small or subtle. Treat people as though we all are beautifully made and cherished... because we are.

You are so loved,



St. Paul's Launching New Photo Directory

We've changed and we have new faces in our midst. Yet, we often draw a blank when it comes to names and faces. Let's change that!

Our church directory will be both printed and a private app visible on both phone and desktop.

Starting August 6, Mark Davis, owner of Revere Photography, will be photographing St. Paul's members and families. Please book a time on either August 6 or August 13 by using this QR code for online reservations.

You are under no pressure to purchase any photos. Plus, you will be able to see your photos and place your order at the time of the photo shoot. Shipping charges will be waived for all orders placed on our two designated photo sessions. —Marty McIntyre



St Paul's Directory

Civil Rights Pilgrimage Offered

The Diocese of Mississippi invites you to join Bishop Duncan Gray, III and Rev. Jenny Newman on a transformative journey of remembrance and reflection as they embark on our three-day, two-night pilgrimage to Selma, AL, and Montgomery, AL, Sept. 20-22.

Together, you will explore the rich history and powerful legacy of the civil rights movement in America. The journey will include visits to the Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, where you will honor the lives of those who fought for justice and

equality.

An offering of Racial Reconciliation Task Force of the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi, the pilgrimage to the Equal Justice Initiative is limited to 25 participants. The cost is \$550 for single occupancy, and \$450 for double.

Participants are welcome to take their own cars, but two vans will be available.

Register at

<https://alliance.wufoo.com/forms/zrcf7jk12ex3v0/> or email Andy Andrews at andrews@dioms.org for questions.

Mediator Offers Education for Ministry Program

For those interested in learning more about the Bible, theological studies and in-depth study, Education for Ministry (EfM) might be the ticket. And The Church of the Mediator has some openings in their program.

EfM is a unique four-year distance learning certificate program in theological education based upon small-group study and practice. Since its founding in 1975 at The University of the South in Sewanee, TN, this international program has assisted more than 120,000 participants in discovering and nurturing their call to Christian service. EfM helps the faithful encounter the breadth and depth of the Christian tradition and bring it into conversation with



their experiences of the world as they study, worship, and engage in theological reflection together.

The Church of the Mediator's EfM group will meet weekly in their Parish Hall from 9-11:30 a.m., beginning in September and running through May. The meeting day will be decided by the current participants. The program allows a group to have 6-12 members. There are a limited number of openings at this time. If you are interested in signing up or want more information, please contact the mentor, Sissie

Wile 601.479.9145 or email her at sissie.wile@gmail.com.

Acolyte Training Set

Welcome back to another exciting year! Our acolytes at St. Paul's are some of the best and I am so excited to work with you all in the coming months and years. Acolyte training and a welcome back gathering is set for Sept. 10 following the 10:30 a.m. service.

I will continue to make myself available starting at 10:05 a.m. that morning to go over any last-minute details for our acolytes before the 10:30 service, and, if necessary, we can schedule another time to meet for training, or even just a pep talk.

Acolytes are an integral part of our liturgical expression and history, and I believe we would truly be lost without their presence. Whether it's your first time, or you've been doing it for years, everyone has a role and a purpose. We welcome all youth ages 10+ to join us, including adults! In addition to fellowship and training opportunities, we are also planning a trip to the 2024 National Acolyte Festival at Washington National Cathedral in October 2024. Be on the lookout for fundraising opportunities for that in the coming months. Thankful for ALL of YOU and the opportunity to serve alongside you,

—Malcom Gee

We Remember in our Prayers

For our Parish family: Andrea Carver, Cheri Barry, Cliff Odom, Delena Avara, Don Pringle, DJ Wells, Elliott Street, Elinor Quick, Eve Morrison, Jerry Wayton, Jo Van Devender, Kay Dickson, Margaret Van Dyke, Mary Dunn, Mary Weems, Peggy Carrico, Susan Hamilton, Tadley, Wanda Blount and Woodie Abraham.

In our senior living communities: Joyce Welsh, Lora Jones and Nita Neville.

Extended family and friends: Adele Whitlock, Alisha Crowell, Anne Chalk, Ben Avara, Betty Perry, Bill Jones, Bill Selman, Bill Slay, Brooke, Charlotte Chaney, Christy Covert, Christopher Alexander, Clancy, Cory Gaylord, Davey Simmons, David, Diane Dunn, Donna Polizzi, Emily Rush, Evie Warden, Francois DuPlessis, Frances, Frank Baker, Frank Barrett, George Farr, Hays Monsour, Jada Dooley, James, Jan, Jeana Bennett, Jo Nell Brown, Jim McGinnis, Jim Thompson, John, Kamie Wert, Ken Fisher, Kevin Williams, Kylie Temple, Lanier McCullough, Leland Tew, Lou Dubose, Martha Hudson, Martha Mazingo, Marti & Will Sorey, Mason, Matt White, Michelle Nelson, Mike Covert, Mize, Nick, Norman, Pat Carver, Patrick Leach, Penny Purnell, Randy Moore, Richard Graham, Rick, Sandra Gray, Sandy Carrier, Shirley Hunter Croft, Steve Waddle, Susan Nichols, Thomas Little, Tom Schram, Travis Sadler, Trent Hartzog, Wanda Farr, Wanda Scott, Willie Spencer and Zack Martin.

We pray for those who have died especially: Stefanie Lynn Rowman; Nell Nichols; Cannon Chance Stuart, great grandson of Gary & Carolyn Jones; Summer Rae Ethridge, sister-in-law of Avery Harwell Ethridge; Joy Richardson, mother of Lindy Deen; and Jimmy Whitehead, brother of Bobbie Rea.

We pray for those serving in the Armed Forces or all who serve overseas and their families, especially Andrew Behm, Shum Benson, Cody Blackwell, Connor Covert, Graham Ford, Luke Graham, Zack Hendericks, Nick Mullen and DJ Robinson.

We pray for our Bishop Brian, for our Rector Austin and his family and our Curate Katie.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Aug. 1Eve Morrison,
Sarah Katherine Simmons
Aug. 4Bob & Kathy Pigford,
Eden Polson, Chad Tibbetts
Aug. 6Rick & Cheri Barry
Aug. 7Adrian & Mardi Page,
Scott Edmonds Ray,
Addyson Sims, Jamie Smith
Aug. 8David & Loretta Hamilton
Aug. 9Virginia Brimble,
Gary & Carolyn Jones
Aug. 10Lauren Graham,
Gordon & Sara Mason

Aug. 10Rose Mary Stump
Aug. 11AJ Page
Aug. 13Susan Coffin, Julie Stump
Aug. 17Bev Pringle, Sarah Woods
Aug. 18Jim & Amy Cady, Kathy Pigford
Aug. 19Austin & Tiffany McGehee
Aug. 20Merry Jo Rea
Aug. 22Harold Noe
Aug. 23Addie Florey
Aug. 24Monica Graham, Mike & Kay Reich
Aug. 25Joan Moore
Aug. 27Scotty Florey, Austin McGehee
Aug. 29Tucker Dunn

Services

	AUGUST 6	AUGUST 13	AUGUST 20	AUGUST 27
VESTRY COUNTERS	John Compton & Lloyd Gray			
8 A.M.				
CHALICE	Malcom Gee	Bob Covert	Malcom Gee	John Carrier
READER	Polly Covert	Polly Covert	Malcom Gee	John Carrier
USHER	Malcom Gee	Bob Covert	Malcom Gee	John Carrier
10:30 A.M.				
READER 1	Sally Gray	John Compton	Malcom Gee	Rob Calcote
READER 2	Jerome Kittrell	Wayne Wuestefeld	Lynn Waddle	Mallory Davis
PRAYERS	Kay Reich	Bobbie Rea	Joan Moore	Candy Ward
USHERS	Michelle Lewis Patrick Lewis	Sara Mason Melissa Love	Joey Martin Graham Martin	Marsha Miller Jim Miller
ACOLYTES	Lucy Simmons Sellers Breaux Carlyle Breaux	Anne Revere Davis William Davis Simmons Davis	Hardin Hiatt Henry Hiatt Remy Stump	Rowan Hanschke Payton Hanschke Britton Dunn
ALTAR GUILD	Melissa Calcote Kay Reich	Melissa Calcote Kay Reich	Connie Arline Lee Loeb	Connie Arline Lee Loeb
CHALICE	Stephen Wilson	Gloria Chancellor	Rick Entrekin	Lynn Waddle

Uniform Drive: Crestwood Elementary School

St. Paul's is partnering with the P.T.O. of Crestwood Elementary School to help stock their uniform closet. What do we need?

- GENTLY worn kids sizes of khaki/black pants, white/royal blue three-button polo shirts or kids belts of any color or style
- We are also accepting cash donations to purchase uniform items.

Please write *School Uniforms* in check memo line.

The deadline for donations is August 31.



EYC Has Grand Out West Pilgrimage



Hats off to Mallory Davis and all the volunteers and youth that made Vacation Bible School "Compassion Camp" 2023 a huge success. The kids had a wonderful time and ended the week with a petting zoo! This was a joint effort between St. Paul's and The Church of the Mediator.

