

**Mission Statement for St. Paul's: To proclaim God's love
by word and example and to seek Christ in one another.**

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 276 Church Street, Montrose, PA 18801

Office 570-278-2954, Mon. to Thu. 8:15am to 1:00pm

Click on link to email St. Paul's: stpaulsmontrose@epix.net

Click on link to go to our Website: <http://stpaulschurchmontrose.org>

Click on link to go to our Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/stpaulsmontrose>

Apr 12 - 18, 2020 Upcoming Events

(Events are at St. Paul's unless specified otherwise)

Our Holy Week & Easter Sunday schedule of services via ZOOM and Facebook live will occur as follows: Maundy Thursday service beginning at 7:30pm, Good Friday Liturgy with Solemn Collects beginning at 2:00pm, Good Friday service (Stations of the Cross) beginning at 7:00pm, Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil beginning at 7:30pm, and Easter Sunday Holy Eucharist beginning at 10:00am.

Readings for Easter Sunday

First Reading: Acts 10:34-43

Psalm: 118:1-2, 14-24

Epistle: Colossians 3:1-4

Gospel: John 20:1-18

Dear Friends,

Who can remember a time when we were not able to join together at church to worship our Risen Lord and Savior on Easter? Certainly not in my lifetime. Our longings to be together must be something like what the disciples felt after they saw their Lord crucified and dead. One day everything was fine-they had just recently marched into Jerusalem behind Jesus who was heralded as a King-and then suddenly, their world collapsed. We too were living our lives as normal until suddenly the Corona virus pandemic changed everything. We're left feeling isolated and afraid, not unlike

the disciples who huddled in the upper room bereft and terrified.

As we journey through Holy Week, we have the opportunity to feel a close connection to Jesus' disciples as they try to make sense of Jesus' last days with them. We listen as Jesus gives a new commandment "that you love one another." We hear Thomas say, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" We participate as Jesus washes the feet of his friends and offers them bread and wine in remembrance of him. We know our betrayal of Jesus in Judas' actions, and we understand the fear with which Peter denies Jesus three times. We are those disciples.

But, thanks be to God, we are people of the Resurrection. We know the rest of the story. We move from the upper room to Jesus' gravesite with Mary and Mary Magdalene and discover an empty tomb! Finally it all makes sense. Jesus is alive and will be forever. His death, out of love for you and me, is a gift that makes us all free--free of the burden of guilt and denial. Jesus, our Risen Lord, calls us his friends and now we know the way.

So, rejoice! Move mentally out of your isolation and "upper room." Call, text, or email your friends. Put on some music and dance. Pray for those who are ill and those caring for them.

Be joyful knowing that our God is in control and we need not be fearful.

The Lord is Risen! The Lord is Risen, indeed.
Amen.

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

I realize that most of us are stuck at home with concerns about family and finances. That's the bad news, but if there were to be an upside it is this:

"Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." Apparently, neither has the Corona Virus prevented the USPS from delivering mail. That means that we still receive bills on a regular basis and we have payroll to make.

If it is at all possible under our current conditions, please send your tithes and pledges to the church office at 276 Church St., Montrose, PA 18801. Another option would be to slip your pledge under the office door if you happen to be going by church.

Thank you for your attention to this request. We will just continue to do the best we can with what we have.

God's peace, Lynne

For those who are ill or have requested our prayers: Margaret Burgh, Kathy Warriner, Joe Welden, Naomi Bennett, Justin, Rita Leigh, Fr. John Wagner & Eric.



Mobile Food Pantry

As you know, St. Paul's supplies the money for bread through our weekly collections in the "bread basket." April 10 will be the next distribution, which is at the Methodist Church.

Pastoral Emergency or Non-Emergency Contact: you can call the parish office during office hours. After hours call Arthur Jones at 570-665-1707 or email him at JonesAL0@sewanee.com

7 Photos this week.



"The Father Arthur Missive" (The F.A.M.)

Written by the Reverend Arthur Jones, III – on Saturday, April 4th, 2020.

In the Gospel passage from Lectionary on the Fifth Sunday of Lent (March 29th), John chapter 11, verse 35 reads thusly: "*Jesus wept.*" Although this particular verse happens to be the shortest one in the Holy Bible, it is also one of the most moving. Jesus was moved to tears for a variety of reasons in the midst of Lazarus' death. Perhaps that is why I was moved to tears earlier today while in a phone conversation with Lynne Graham – St. Paul's Senior Warden.

As we rapidly approach Holy Week and Easter Sunday in the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic, *everything* has changed; and continues to change on a weekly and even daily basis. Bishop Kevin – for the greatest good and the safety of all of the Diocese of Bethlehem’s congregants – has extended the ceasing of all church operations and in-person gatherings through May 3rd. I realize how deeply unsettling this development is for you. It’s deeply unsettling for me as well, but the decision is in perfect alignment with the best health practices as ordered by our governor, our mayors, and the highest health officials in Pennsylvania.

The question has come up: “*Where is Father Arthur?*” Perhaps you’ve heard that question recently. Perhaps you’ve asked this question yourself silently or aloud. It’s a fair question that I’m more than happy to answer. **Physically**, I’m in Elmira, New York during the week under Shelter in Place with Mother Jenny Scott – who is my family. Jenny was gracious enough to offer me an office, a conference room, and access to St. Michael’s Chapel inside of Grace Episcopal Church, where she serves as Priest-in-Charge. This is the office space I’ve been using for the past couple of weeks or so; but I’m in Montrose on weekends. But **spiritually, mentally, and emotionally**, I’m right here with each and every one of you. Because of the pandemic, I’m working even harder now than I was before all of the restrictions and prohibitions were imposed upon us by our state and local governments and the Diocesan Office. I work a minimum of 12 hours a day, 7 days a week. I am not observing my weekly off-day every Thursday or my weekly Sabbath day every Friday. Why, you ask? Because I’m needed in many ways.

I’ve been busy calling congregants from each of our parishes – to check on them, to see how they’re doing, and to inquire how I can be of assistance to them. I spend a portion of my day every day praying for you and with you. I’m checking on our elderly congregants: especially those who are sick, elderly, live alone, and/or are especially vulnerable to Coronavirus because of an existing medical condition. I’m reassuring congregants and even non-congregants who are afraid of the radical, societal changes happening throughout our cities, our nation, and the world. I’m counseling congregants who are having difficulty processing the recent death of their loved ones during this difficult time. I’m observing the Daily Offices: Morning Prayer, Noonday Prayer, Evening Prayer, and even Compline every single day on the online platforms of ZOOM, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. I’ve created and maintain on a daily basis an active Facebook page for St. Mark’s Episcopal Church (URL: <https://www.facebook.com/St-Marks-Episcopal-Church-in-New-Milford-PA-VIDEO-Channel-103393321300163/>), Christ Episcopal Church (URL: <https://www.facebook.com/Christ-Episcopal-Church-in-Susquehanna-Depot-PA-105887617715869/>), and the Episcopal Parishes of Upper Susquehanna County, PA (URL: <https://www.facebook.com/The-Episcopal-Parishes-of-Upper-Susquehanna-County-PA-109264080702698/>) – in addition to the existing Facebook page for Saint Paul’s Episcopal Church (URL: <https://www.facebook.com/stpaulsmontrose/>). I’m in frequent contact and consultation with the Diocesan Office in Bethlehem via text messages, emails, and video conferencing sessions every week for the latest updates and information.

Until last Sunday, I was observing Morning Prayer with Homily physically present and livestreaming from each of our parishes in Upper Susquehanna County on Sunday

mornings. By the personal request of Bishop Kevin, I have agreed to abstain from doing so for the foreseeable future – opting instead to have one unified service for the Episcopal Parishes of Upper Susquehanna County located at St. Paul’s at 10:00am sharp every Sunday morning until the current Coronavirus pandemic protocols have been lifted; however long that takes. For the interim period, there will be one homily instead of three. For the interim period, all congregants of our three parishes will be able to use ZOOM Conferencing app to either **listen** to the entire Sunday service via **their phone** or **watch** the entire Sunday service via their **laptops, phones, tablets, or iPads**. As of Palm Sunday, Andrew Kurth will be operating the video camera at the rear of St. Paul’s for the recording and livestreaming of Sunday Morning Prayer with Homily at 10:00am for our dedicated YouTube Channel and our website as before. This is our new worship service schedule – and it will not change until the restrictions are lifted.

I’ve stayed in touch with our Senior Wardens and other lay leaders and Vestry members. With their advice and approval, I’m completing the third round of revisions to our Holy Week schedule of services due to new restrictions imposed. **Our Holy Week & Easter Sunday schedule of services via ZOOM and Facebook live will occur as follows:** Maundy Thursday service beginning at 7:30pm, Good Friday Liturgy with Solemn Collects beginning at 2:00pm, Good Friday service (Stations of the Cross) beginning at 7:00pm, Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil beginning at 7:30pm, *and* Easter Sunday Holy Eucharist beginning at 10:00am.

Please be advised that our Maundy Thursday and Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil worship services will take place in Elmira, New York in partnership with Mother Jenny Scott and Grace Episcopal Church, Elmira – and with Mother Wanda Copeland and Trinity Episcopal Church, Elmira. Both Good Friday services will take place at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Montrose. Easter Sunday Holy Eucharist will also take place at St. Paul’s.

On Wednesday, April 8th, look for a newspaper article in the Susquehanna Independent written by Staci Wilson featuring a contribution from me on “Easter in the midst of COVID-19.” Our parishes are repeatedly mentioned by me, in addition to why Easter means so much to us, and how to worship with us online.

The co-shared Rite II Evening Prayer with Mother Jenny and myself on Facebook live last Monday afternoon received 600 views within two hours of its completion. People from various faith traditions, diverse backgrounds, and numerous places are actively seeking out places where they can worship online with clergy members who offer a calm pastoral presence along with a reliable daily schedule. Our online content is not done for my glory; but for God’s glory, along with the promotion of our three parishes.

I love each and every one of you. I miss each and every one of you. I pray for each and every one of you, your families, your friends, your co-workers, your pets, and everyone you encounter. I pray for our parishes and our Bishop and our Diocese and its staff members. I pray for all who hold authority in government: especially Donald, our president; and Tom, our governor – that they may govern and make right decisions for the greatest good of all.

I sincerely ask for your prayers because I need them. Like all of you, I'm doing the very best I can under unforeseen circumstances. No seminary, no textbook, and no Curate training prepared me – or any members of ordained clergy – for this.

I lay awake at night thinking about what more I can do for our parishes and our congregants. You don't need me adding or magnifying your anxieties about Coronavirus. The news on television, on the radio, in the newspapers, and/or on the internet freak us all out enough as it is. You need me to be calm, loving, patient, and available to you. And I'm spending every waking minute doing just that.

As of now, I'll be sending the Father Arthur Missive (the F.A.M.) out every Monday via email and snail mail for those who do not use or like computers. All the aforementioned activities and communications will continue as we move forward. If I don't call you as early or as often as you feel I should, by all means call me. My clergy-specific cellphone number remains [570] 665-1707. Call me or text me. I'm available to you night and day.

In closing, I wept earlier today because we're physically separated. I cried earlier today because some of you have felt abandoned. I wept earlier today because I hope we all realize that we need each other; now more than ever. This isn't the time for division – this is a time for unity and faith. I also wept because I've been thinking about how glorious it will be on that Sunday in the not-too-distant future when we will once again be able to have Holy Eucharist in all the ways we've come to love and cherish. I'm thinking about how wonderful it will be to shake hands again and hug each other again and share the Holy Sacraments as one people united in Christ Jesus. Imagine how great it will be for us to sit down and eat and drink together again. I believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. I believe in you. I believe in our Diocese. I believe in our parishes. There is only one way for us to survive this pandemic with our hearts and minds and spirits intact: *together*.

May the Lord be with you. May the Lord be with us all.

Palm Sunday

**All glory, laud, and honor to you, Redeemer, King,
to whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.**

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.'



Palm Sunday Past



As you know, service at St. Paul's was canceled last week. But here are some pictures from three years ago to remind us how we would have done it. While the pews were empty and only Andrew was in the church, Father Arthur live streamed the service. Did you ever wonder what it looked like from Arthur's point of view?



The Altar Guild had dressed the Altar in Red which will be changed several times during Holy Week from Red to Purple to a stripped altar to white on Easter.



St. Paul's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH



We Miss You
Stay Safe

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