



**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](mailto: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>

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

## June 14 – June 20, 2020

As I think of our ST. Paul's Family and friends, I am reminded of the old proverb "absence makes the heart grow fonder". This is so true especially at this time when we are separated from so many. We miss all of you and think of you so often. Sometimes with smiles and laughter and sometimes with sadness and tears. I can see many of you sitting in church on Sundays. Not hard to picture because you are almost always in the same seats in the same pews. Occasionally one of you will be guilty of confusing the whole congregation by sitting elsewhere.

We miss Karen's hugs, Lynne's wise words and announcements, Joe and Esther's love and devotion of God and each other Tom's last Alleluia and of course coffee hour after church where we can socialize and share the weeks happenings along with our joys and sorrows. This reminds me of some quotes from Mr. Rogers, a person that I have always loved and admired. "I find that more and more every day how important it is for people to share their memories" and "When times get scary look for the helpers". St Paul's has long been known as the helpers. Not only in our congregation but with our Community Outreach such as the Food Pantry, AA, Stop the Stigma, sleeping bags for the homeless and many more. Knowing we will still continue gives me great pride as a member of St Paul's.

Personally, Jack and I are keeping busy at home by digging, gardening planting, feeding the birds and chasing the squirrels. We are enjoying nature and the beautiful weather. A reminder that life continues in spite of pandemics and civil unrest.

What will future historians say about the year 2020? Maybe that it was the worst of times but that the end result was that it taught the world to be more compassionate, kind, understanding and charitable.

I wish to share Richard Rohr's daily Prayer for our Community:

"O Great Love, thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. Help us become a community that vulnerably shares each other's burdens and the weight of glory. Listen to our hearts' longings for the healing of our world. Knowing that you are hearing us better than we are speaking, we offer these prayers in all the holy names of God, amen."

God's Peace

Carol Lasher

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Birthdays for June:** Elizabeth Bailey June 8, Rita Leigh & Cathy Hammons June 10, Ben Zalewski June 17, Lynne Graham June 18, Jack Lasher June 20, Mary Zalewski June 21, Charlotte Ellis June 23 & Margaret Baker June 24.

**Our thanksgivings:** We give thanks for those who celebrate their birthdays this week. *O God, look with favor, we pray, as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their life. Amen.* We give thanks for those celebrating wedding anniversaries this week. *Grant o God, in your compassion, that those celebrating wedding anniversaries this week may live out the covenant they have made. May they grow in forgiveness, loyalty and love, and come at last to the eternal joys, which you have promised through Jesus Christ our Lord; and may the blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with them this day and forever. Amen.*

## No Social Distancing

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*Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed— not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence— continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.*

-Paul (Philippians 2:12)

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A former director of the CDC, an epidemiologist who has advised Republican and Democrat presidents, gave a truly remarkable and humble interview last week (I know, another article. I'm sure you haven't read enough of them during the last 3 months). The focus was clarifying what we really do and really don't know about COVID-19 and its path forward. He spoke of the various possibilities, from a slow burn of infections for a while, to a

dip and then strong resurgence in the fall. He spoke of what the country will need to do in order to navigate the best way forward. There were simply no easy solutions or absolute answers, which was refreshingly honest since everyone knows everything about everything. But that's not the point here.

I was deeply struck by one comment that he made in passing. He was asked about what people can really do to protect themselves. As he responded about obviously minimizing contact with large groups of people, he said this:

*"I categorically reject the concept of social distancing. It's physical distancing. I hope we never social distance, ever."*

Well there's a statement for disciples of Jesus to chew on.

There are things that work their way into our subconscious

without knowing it. Today I'm thinking about what those are, I and I wonder if the phrase "social distancing" has become one of those concepts.

Paul makes a little statement while he's in jail writing to the young church he started in Philippi. He talks about when he was present with them, they obeyed the disciples apostle's teaching and worked out their own relationship with Jesus together intentionally. But he seems to hint that when he's not with them, when physical distance is separating them... that it's going to be doubly important that they lean into their surrender to Jesus and commitment to the



gospel. Because everything is harder when you're apart.

Everything is harder when you're apart. Faith is harder. Friendship is harder. Understanding is harder. Love is harder.

Over the months, as so many people have physically had larger amounts of separation, I think it's hard to deny that there has been some serious social distancing as well. Not the kind that keeps us from coronavirus infection, but the kind that threatens the health of our relationships.

Relationships may feel far more optional than they used to. Have you noticed that? And along with that, it has become easier to view each other through a smaller amount of criteria.

Here's what happens when social (not just physical) distance takes root:

- Screens dominate our interactions and dynamic, technicolor, complicated people become two dimensional.
- Friendships feel like too much work.
- We feel the temptation to become harsher and more critical rather than gentler and more sensitive.
- We are constantly left with our own thoughts, forgetting why we need other people entirely.

The salvation that Paul speaks of to the Philippian church is at the tail end of a statement about humbly learning to love one other and put others first... so yes, it definitely includes the social, relational work that is the Body of Christ. You can't separate Jesus from his body, so anytime we talk about following Jesus, it means that cultivating loving relationships is always right there with it. And that can bring some serious fear and trembling, because Jesus-centered community takes work.

My hope is that we notice the difference between physical distancing and social distancing, and choose to walk the path of life together. Imagine if....

- In the days to come, the church becomes more vital than ever because we so desperately need each other for support, for mutual learning, and for loving relationships that keep us grounded.
- In the days to come, people make the difficult choice to have face to face conversations even when they feel lazy or tired (like I often do these days) because they know that physical distancing is important, but social distancing could kill us.
- In the days to come our efforts toward compassion, unity, and equality will all be rooted in the repeated truth that *we belong to each other in Jesus* (Romans 12:5), and nothing can separate us if our eyes are on him every step.

These are the ways that we "work out our salvation"... not only in each other's presence, but now much more because of each others' absence.

By the way, this is not a thinly veiled message about having hard conversations regarding racial injustice, though it certainly includes that conversation. We just need each other.

Period.

Full Stop.

We really do. It's how God made us. And we need holy reminders all the time that if the church is to be the Church, it will always choose to reject social distancing, because love knows no separation.

Jesus, keep me moving toward others even when it's hard.

Peace, Keith Miller

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

**Statements** If you would like a midyear statement please email me [stpaulsmontrose@epix.net](mailto:stpaulsmontrose@epix.net) or call the office 570-278-2954. Betty

**Your tithes and pledges** can be mailed to the church office at 276 Church St., Montrose, PA

18801. Or you can slip your pledge under the office door if you happen to be going by the church.

**Pastoral Emergency or Non-Emergency Contact:** you can call the parish office during office hours. After hours call Lynne Graham 570-934-1160.

**5 Photos this week.**

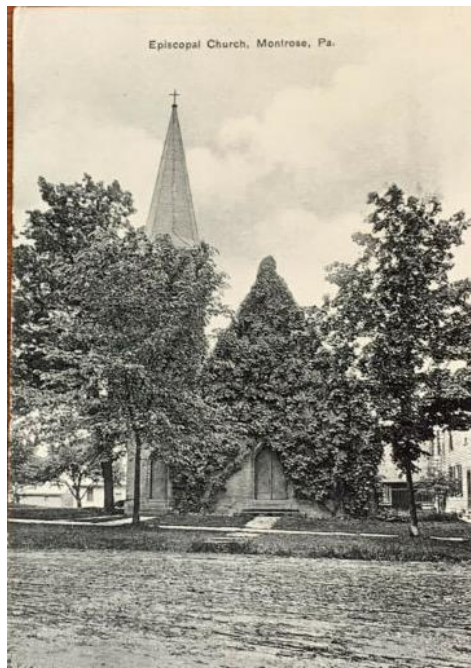
## Trinity Sunday – The First Sunday After Pentecost

*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*

**Ye watchers and ye holy ones, Bright seraphs, cherubim, and thrones,  
Raise the glad strain, Alleluia!**

**Cry out, dominions, pryncedoms, powers, Virtues, archangels, angels' choirs,  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!**

## St Paul's Postcard 1911



It was summer 1911 when this picture was taken from the Montrose House Hotel. There were only two trees in front of church, the Rev. Ernest Wetherill Wood was our rector, and Church Street hadn't been paved yet and was a sea of mud. The English ivy on the front of the church was at its height, making one wonder how parishioners got into church without hedge shears. The Odd Fellows Hall to the right of church was still standing and the parish hall, which replaced it, was still 15 years in the future. If you look close, you can just see the Sabbath School Chapel building at the back that was connected to the church by a door where the organ is now!

## Morning Prayer

*Prayers arise to you O Lord, as we begin our day; the shades of night have passed away, as we rested in your care. We have woken up to days like this, so many times before. We pray that you will help us Lord, make this a meaningful day.* Fr. William McGinty, Christ Church, Forest City.

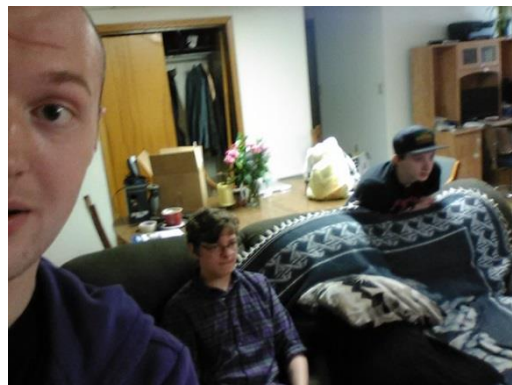
## How's Everybody Doing?

**Naomi Bennett** says hello! Naomi lives at the Square and for the last two months they couldn't have visitors. They are allowed to sit outside which she was doing when this picture was taken. Lots of puzzles and television.



## Andrew Wurth

Hi, everybody. I hope everyone is OK and safe. This was sent from me and my friends trying to hang out while also social distancing (one is not so good at it). I also shaved my head to see how it looked on my iPhone!



## Who is This?

Yep, it's Margaret. She is wondering how everyone else is doing! She's been inside her house since this thing started. She wanted to know when church will start.



## Our Glass Doors are Open

It's spring. Our wooden inside doors are open now and will be until the heat is back on. We lock the glass doors. But look, our rhododendrons are blooming!

