

ST. PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Weekly Update

March 3 - March 9



276 Church Street, Montrose, PA 18801

Office 570-278-2954, Monday-Thursday 8:15am-3:00pm

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

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

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To proclaim God's love by word and example and to seek Christ in one another.

Our Vestry Members

The Rev. Elizabeth Grohowski

John Warriner, Sr. Warden

Vickie Calby, Jr. Warden

John Finlon, Treasurer

Wanda Peirce, Clerk

Jack Lasher

Dan Graham

Vera Dunn

In person worship or you can watch live streamed on YouTube. Go to St. Paul's website

<http://stpaulschurchmontrose.org> and click this red button  on the front page, which takes you to our YouTube page.



Donations You can scan the QR Code. Or go to St. Paul's Website and click the Donate Button for online giving. You can mail your tithes & pledges to the church office at 276 Church St., Montrose, PA 18801

Church Closures

Please turn your radio dial to WPEL 96.5 FM. We will announce any closure of our church service on that station.

View from the Pulpit:

On Saturday, February 24th lay and clergy members of the Diocese of Bethlehem met at Saint Stephens Pro- Cathedral in Wilkes Barre PA for a celebration of the Reverend Absalom Jones and Black History Month. Our speaker was the Reverend Ryan Hawthorne of Houston TX. The morning began with a prayer and poem by Langston Hughes. Mother Ryan told us that their talk would be on the topic of rootedness. Our biblical texts for the consideration were Jeremiah 1:1-10 and Psalm 1, and our metaphors were gardening/ farming and geology.

“Now I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.” Jeremiah 1:10

They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper. Ps. 1:3

She began by relating a story to us about an occurrence in 2016 located in the Siberian tundra at the Arctic Circle. A phenomenon called permafrost existed in this region.

Permafrost is a thick subsurface layer of soil that remains frozen throughout the year.

However, due to the earth’s rising temperature, heat rose from underground and thawed the permafrost revealing the bodies of deer that had been under this permafrost since the 1940’s. It came to the surface with intact anthrax spores. The local people noticed that they were becoming ill, some even died. It wreaked havoc in the area. Eventually scientists discovered the deer infected with anthrax spores and disposed of them properly so that people would no longer be made sick by them.

She then said, the things we bury, we hope to stay underground. But eventually they will all come to the surface. These things under the surface can be good or can destroy us.

When they can destroy us, they have to be uprooted. Mother Ryan shared this history with us as an allegorical tale related to the need to uproot the ingrained disease of systemic racism in America.

She then moved on to the story of the Reverend Absalom Jones, who I wrote about in a previous article. His courage and determination served his fellows and the church at large very well in post slavery, segregation America.

She then shared that Houston is a city of oaks. And that the oak tree is a strong deeply rooted tree it can withstand fire, wood rot, and decay. Racism also has deep roots. We were asked, how do we uproot it? We broke into groups twice during the talk. The first time we broke into groups, someone asked, Who is your brother and sister? Someone else said that people say, this doesn’t pertain to us, why should we engage in the discussion?

Mostly though, the conversation did not center around racism per se but communication. And what blocks it. As we gathered again there was a general consensus that fear is also deeply rooted and can block open and effective communication. Fear of communication, fear of loss of identity or status. Fear of being de-centered.

The second time we broke into group someone in our group asked why white people feel the need to say that they're not a racist. which led to someone else saying that they heard once a question that really struck them that was OK you're not a racist but are you anti racist? And do you have the courage to respond when you witness racism? This question actually ties into our first discussion in the witness at the cross class we are doing this Lent. We discussed George Floyd's death at the hand of a police officer and the response of those around while it happened. And that depending on the situation, it takes great courage to call out someone's abusive or racist actions.

Mother Ryan spoke of the steel, coal, and iron industries, as well as the dichotomy between the barons of industry and the workers. While it was the workers who were intimately acquainted with the process and products, it was the barons who made all the money. At first, the barons built communities for their workers to be conveniently located to their product. Then they abandoned them when a better opportunity came along. When abandoned, those towns were filled with people who had a fear of the unknown. They did not know what would or could fill the hole created by this loss. As we all know people in these towns have struggled to reinvent themselves and there home towns. In farming before you can plant seed and grow something, you need to till the soil and uproot everything that could inhibit growth. In extreme cases you may even need to raise the soil. Only then can you plant, water, fertilize, and grow an abundant crop.

Mother Ryan concluded her talk reminding us that it is the work of the Christian to dream, to be creative, to have imagination and a vision of a better future in order to create the beloved community.

What will we plant? It is believed that Abraham was buried beneath an oak and that the oak of Abraham is still standing. God calls us to be oaks tall and strong, but evil also stands strong and tall, and white supremacy still stands strong and must be uprooted so that we can plant something rooted in goodness. May we all remember that we are all neighbors and friends. God loves each of us unconditionally and wants us to be rooted in love.



Photo Credit -
The Rev.
Rebecca
Barnes

View from the Pew:

I Remember....

One of the favorite 363 times of my life was being a shepherdess to a small flock of sheep for 16 years and reminded every day of the parallel between a shepherd and his/her sheep to the Incarnate Christ Jesus.

Jesus, God Incarnate said "I am the Good Shepherd:

In the 23 Psalm David, Who is called the Shepherd King proclaimed,

1. The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want....

Just as we know our shepherd is there to provide all our needs and having just that quench-es our desires for more and instills our contentment.

2. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.

A shepherd knows his sheep must eat the fresh green grass of the morning when it is moist with the dew and how his sheep look for water that is still and non-threatening. He knows his sheep will then lie down and rest without fear because they know their shepherd is near and they are content and unafraid. (Psalm 4:8 I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone Oh Lord, make me dwell in safety.) Our shepherd provides our every need but we need not always to think of our worldly sustenance but of our spiritual food which is ever before us. Like the wooly sheep we fear the unknown and seek protection. However, sheep have no defense against the many dangers except to trust the faithful and loving shepherd. Sheep form a crowded "flock" to keep the young and old in the center and stay strong in one mass of wool, their only defense. (Who said sheep were dumb?)

3. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

How many times I have needed my spirit to be restored and was cast down and my Shepherd lifted me. I remember running to my own sheep when "cast" in the deep snow (fallen with belly up) and needed to be immediately turn upright or she would die. (Not easy to lift a 250 lb. sheep wet with wool) Sheep follow the shepherd because they are content to follow the will of the shepherd and discard their own will for his. Jesus said "Follow me" but like sheep we some-times wander off - another parallel. Following Jesus is our intent but the ways of man are forgetful and often we go astray.

4. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Isn't death about trusting God's promises. Accepting the Mystery of God. Trusting as Jesus taught us in his earthly years and in his own dying? Trusting our Shepherd to lead us even to better pastures? Fear cannot own us nor take our power away. Sheep do not trust the rocky edges of the mountains nor the deep valleys they must endure to reach the Verdi green pasture for the summer range where they graze until Autumn. I never used a rod nor needed one with a small pasture but the staff was useful to separate when necessary or just to signal my lead. I kept my staff. Shepherds of old made their rods to use as deterrents to scatter the sheep or to bring in a stray or to threaten a predator. The rod and staff can be symbolic of God's word and power.

5. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.
Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

A good shepherd will prepare the pasture to be void of predators and poisonous vegetation. Like sheep we have deep valleys and mountains to climb, often with fear throughout a life time but Jesus walks with us in promise. In summers I would smooth my sheep's faces with an oil of herbs to keep the pestilence from their eyes and noses and this practice would remind me of the covenant practiced for thousands of years. Anointing remains in the church today using holy oil with the sign of the cross on our foreheads. A time that stands still. My cup runs over and over. Gratitude opens and closes my day.

6. Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. How profound this psalm from David who worshiped and served the "Shepherd-King"

-Carol Marker

We would love for you to be included!

Article submissions (photos, community news items, or a personal or faith story) are due every Wednesday. This is YOUR newsletter, and all congregants are invited to share their stories and photos. Please email your items to Kate at stpaulsmontrose@epix.net or John Warriner at jdwarri@me.com; post an item to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 276 Church St. Montrose, PA 18801 on Facebook; or drop a note in the offering plate.

Sundays Service

March
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Readings for this Week:

First Reading: Exodus 20:1-17

Psalms: 19

The Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Gospel: John 2:13-22

This Week's Ministers:

Celebrant: The Rev. Elizabeth Grohowski

Altar Guild: Sandy Seeger

Announcements: John Warriner

Lector: John Warriner

Hospitality:

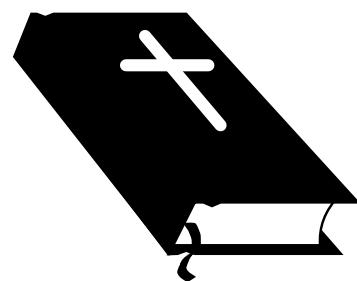
This week's Hymns:

Let thy Blood in mercy poured

Rock of ages, cleft for me

Praise to the living God!

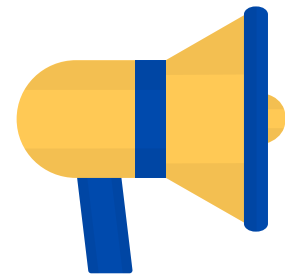
Lord Jesus, think on me



This week's Gospel according to: John

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Happenings and Announcements



Soup Night is in one week! March 6th and we can always use some extra hands so come over to the church if you're free!



For those who are ill or have requested our prayers:

Margaret Burgh, Naomi Bennett, Rita Leigh, Nancy Finlon, Carol Marker, The Rogers Family, Victor

Pastoral Emergency or Non-Emergency Contact:

You can call the parish office during office hours. After hours, call Mother Liz 212-222-8109.



This Months Birthdays:

John Finlon 3/6, Elizabeth Smith 3/15, Edgar Warriner 3/20, Elaine Petrzala 3/22, Ann Kiefer 3/22, Tom Undercoffler 3/30



This Months Anniversaries:

Our thanksgivings:

We give thanks for those who celebrate their birthdays this week. O God, our times are in your hand: look with favor, we pray, on your servants 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 lives. 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.

Last Week's Service and Events

LAST SUNDAY – Second Sunday in Lent, February 25, 2024

Take up your cross, the Savior said,
If you would my disciple be;
Deny yourself, the world forsake,
And humbly follow after me.

The February 25, 2024, 10:00 Holy Eucharist Service was officiated by Mother Liz. John Warriner made the announcements and read as lector, and Lynne Graham served as chalice. Jack and Carol provided hospitality. The new vestry members were commissioned. As you know, our live-streamed services can be watched live or any time on YouTube. Just go to our webpage and hit the red button.



Book Study

Our Lenten book study discusses *Witness at the Cross* by Amy-Jill Levine. Each session is independent, so please consider joining our conversation after church on Sunday. You did not have to be at the first two to join.





Shout Out From Florida

Our snowbird parishioners, Bob and Vera, sent a shout out to those of us up here in the north. They seem to be enjoying the sunny south. When you coming back guys we miss you?

Martha and Kate have new calves

It's almost spring and its calving time. Martha's cow just birthed a healthy baby boy. Martha said the mother hid it but she found the hiding place and all is well. Kates heifer had a little girl and has been parading her around the pasture. Welcome to the world little ones.



Rhododendron

If those buds are a predictor, we will have gorgeous and numerous blooms in Spring. Take a peak when you go up the main church stairs.

End of an Era

St. Paul's has chartered the Cub Scouts for generations of Montrose boys, but all good things come to an end. Thank you to Dave Nice who donated his time, talents, and energy to encourage so many young boys on their way. There were many pine derby races in the Celtic Room with many good memories.



March 14th Last Year

Don't get too excited about spring and don't start planting things yet. Here is a photograph of the snow we had last March 14th.

Sleeping Bags

Yup, still going strong.



LATE FEBRUARY IN SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY

“Late February days; and now, at last, might you have thought that winter’s woe was past; so fair the sky was and so soft the air.” It was a great week. The first flock of geese flew over the house on Monday. Flying high and heading north. Their honking is always so stirring and a sure sign of spring. Sunsets are changing. As of Monday, the pond (and Lake Montrose) still had a skim of ice on it. Everything is still brown but still a great time to walk. Still three weeks until spring.

