

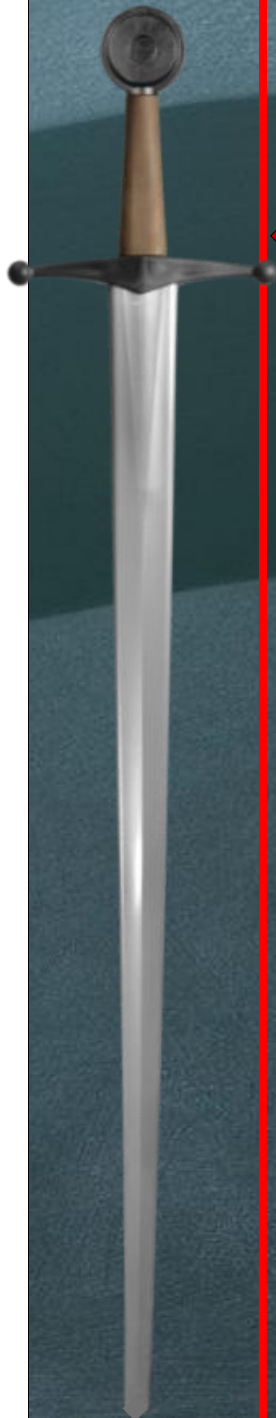
*Transforming
Lives Through
Jesus Christ*

SWORD POINTS

September 14, 2023

www.SaintPaulsBrookfield.com

(203) 775-9587



**Wiping the
Slate Clean**



† Account-ing Lesson

The Israelites in the desert escaping the Egyptians is a classic Biblical Epic. A Pillar of Cloud by day and the Pillar lights up in the night - their only GPS. And the parting of the Red Sea - a universally known story and some people even know it without conjuring the image of Charlton Heston. After getting across the Sea on dry land, as it folds over and drowns the Egyptians, it says in Exodus 14:31, So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses. And then the rest of the journey went well, right? Stay tuned for updates.

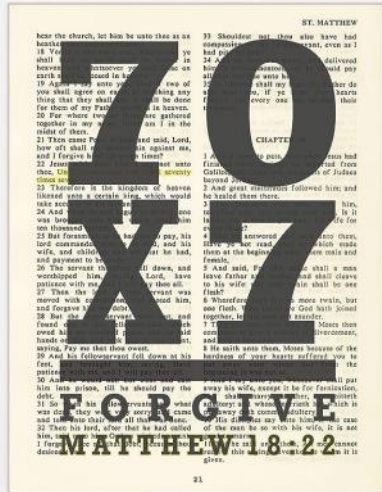
Romans 14:1-12 offers a stark lesson in our individual accountability. If it isn't perfectly relevant to our very time, nothing is. Why do you pass judgment on your brother or your sister? ...For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. Read the entire piece, re-read, read again and, as we say, "inwardly digest." It is quite a prelude to this week's Gospel.

Jesus tells Peter that seventy-seven times we are to forgive, or, as in an older perhaps more familiar translation to some, seventy times seven. Sometimes forgiving once feels beyond our capacity, but we sure can snap to judgment in a nano-second. Does that instant judgment of another have something to do with a projection of what we don't like about ourselves, specifically the uncomfortable awareness of our own sins. When we push to move beyond denial and engage in thoughtful, prayerful reflection of who we are and how we react, remember the saying, If God forgives

you, who are you not to forgive yourself? Of course, in these tumultuous times, anger and judgment seem to permeate the very air that we breathe. Forgiving is a challenge when the stakes feel so highly charged. Plus, when we dig deeper, we discover that forgiveness received and given isn't a mere high-five-good-to-go. It requires a significant, deliberate, conscious change in us without requiring the same of others. Oh, the agony! When we purposely accept the forgiveness of God and make a sincere intentional pledge and employ much effort to be better and do better, we experience a lifting of our spirit, a freedom, and a strengthening of our faith even though, too often, short-lived.

When we feel forgiven, it is easier to extend forgiveness, understanding, and compassion to others. When judgment and cynicism wane and we feel forgiving, the work of faith, hope, and love becomes more instinctual though not less difficult. It is a continuous process filled with detours, backtracking, monumental failure, and persistence in starting over. Paul reminds us that we are each accountable to God. Perhaps a sticky note that says accountable, on the dashboard of our car or on our computer screen when we log into social media, will help us to remember in one of those many moments, that it is God's favorable judgment we seek. We need frequent reminders that it is our own responsibility to live as a disciple of Christ, with honor. After all, as Paul asks, who am I to judge another?

Jesus is uncomfortably clear that God will forgive us AS, in the way that, we forgive others. How simply difficult. Okay then, it's a new day, the long road is before us, and, we are never alone as long as we seek that Pillar of Cloud and Light. Let us follow the wisdom of Moses, Paul, and Jesus, and walk always toward God's dry and holy ground with mercy, compassion, and forgiveness for others in our hearts, and an account-ing lesson to remember.



SATURDAY

† Parish Input Meeting

Please join us for a **Parish Input Meeting** on **Saturday, September 16th, 9:30 - 11:30 am** in **Crocker Hall**.

We will meet to assess our parish identity in terms of our mission, evaluate our strengths and weaknesses, and sketch our vision for the future.



Please sign up if you plan to attend. Coffee and pastries will be available.



† This Week at St. Paul's

Thu, Sep 14

Holy Cross Day

- 9:30 am - Men's Study / Discussion Group, Guild Room
- 7:30 pm - Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Fri, Sep 15

- 6:30 pm - Young Families Bible Study & Gathering

Sat, Sep 16

- 7:30 am - John 21:12 Group, Theo's Downtown Diner, New Milford
- 8:00 am - Men's Prayer Breakfast, Crocker Hall
- 9:30 am - Parish Input Meeting, Crocker Hall

Sun, Sep 17

The 16th Sunday after Pentecost

- 8:00 am - **Traditional Holy Communion** ([YouTube Live](#))
- 9:30 am - Sunday School Registration
- 10:30 am - **HolyBaptism & Contemporary Holy Communion** ([YouTube Live](#))
- 7:00 pm - Recovery & Self-Reflection, Guild Room ([Zoom](#))

Mon, Sep 18

- 7:00 pm - Men's Bible Study, Crocker Hall ([YouTube Live](#))

Tues, Sep 19

- 9:30 am - Ladies Tuesday AM Bible Study, Guild Room
- 7:00 pm - Boy Scout Troop #5

Wed, Sep 20

- 8:00 am - PraiseMoves ([Zoom](#))
- 10:00 am - **Holy Communion & Healing** ([YouTube Live](#))
- 11 to Noon - Drive-Thru Food Collection
- 5:30 pm - Cubs Scouts Pack #5
- 7:00 pm - Ladies Evening Bible Study, ([Zoom](#))

Thu, Sep 21

St. Matthew, Apostle Evangelist

- 9:30 am - Men's Study / Discussion Group, Guild Room
- 7:30 pm - Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Sat, Sep 23

- 7:30 am - John 21:12 Group, Theo's Downtown Diner, New Milford
- 8:00 am - Men's Prayer Breakfast, Crocker Hall
- 10:00 am - St. Paul's Quilters, Crocker Hall

Sun, Sep 24

The 17th Sunday after Pentecost

- 8:00 am - **Traditional Holy Communion** ([YouTube Live](#))
- 9:30 am - Adult Class, Guild Room
- 10:30 am - **Contemporary Holy Communion** ([YouTube Live](#))
- 10:40 am - Sunday School, Classrooms
- 7:00 pm - Recovery & Self-Reflection, Guild Room ([Zoom](#))

Check our website daily for schedule updates.



† **Death, Life, and Forgiveness**

[Exodus 14:19-31](#) - [Psalm 114](#) - [Romans 14:1-12](#) - [Matthew 18:21-35](#)

The defining story of the children of Israel's exodus from their bondage in Egypt is rightly remembered not as a single story confined to a specific time, a precise moment, and a perennial conflict between two peoples, though it is summarized in such terms. "Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians, and Israel saw Egyptians dead on the seashore" (Ex. 14:30). It is possible to read this story as God's "preferential option for the poor" in a way that stigmatizes the Egyptians for all time. Yes, God acts on behalf of the oppressed, but this will and must mean that God works to accomplish the salvation of the entire created order, all of which is fallen. Even the oppressor, utterly on the wrong side of justice, is trapped by a dehumanizing force. Indeed, the oppressor is the one who gains the whole world and loses his own soul and so stands in need of deliverance.

The story is about the human family. In a sense, Egypt and Israel are a single human soul, or perhaps every soul. This is how the early theologians read the story. The whole Egyptian army - Pharaoh's horses, the chariots, and the chariot drivers, are sin, the flesh, and the devil. The avenging army represents "Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God," "the evil powers of this world that corrupt and destroy the creatures of God," and "all sinful desires that draw us from the love of God" (Holy Baptism, the *Book of Common Prayer*).

To cite one fourth-century example, the Catecheses of John Chrysostom, "The Israelites witness marvels; you also will witness marvels, greater and more splendid than those which accompanied them in their

departure from Egypt. You did not see Pharaoh drowned with his armies, but have seen the devil with his weapons overcome by the water of Baptism. The Israelites passed through the sea; you have passed from death to life. They were delivered from the Egyptians; you have been delivered from the power of darkness. The Israelites were freed from slavery to a pagan people; you have been freed from the much greater slavery to sin" (Cat. 3, 24-27).

Another example, contemporaneous with Chrysostom, is St. Ambrose's teaching on the sacred mysteries, that is, the sacraments. "You observe that even then holy Baptism was prefigured in that passage of the Hebrews, wherein the Egyptian perished, and the Hebrew escaped. For what else are we daily taught in this sacrament but that guilt is swallowed up and error done away, but that virtue and innocence remain unharmed?" Again and again, we encounter this teaching: We are the Egyptian and the Hebrew; we die in the water and are raised up from the water.

In the Christian dispensation, the exodus story becomes a story about baptism, and among the rich layers of meaning associated with baptism, forgiveness is of special importance. Sins are washed away, and guilt is swallowed up. The old Adam dies and a new being is born.

While baptism is never repeated, its themes are recurrent. Every day is a day when death and new birth unfold as the deepest mystery of the Christian life. Every day is a day of forgiveness. From this truth follows an admonition: "Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or why do you despise you brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God" (Rom. 4:10). Standing there, we will need forgiveness. And because we have been forgiven, we are called to forgive from the heart "seventy-seven times," that is, always (Matt. 18:21-35).

Look It Up

Read: Romans 6:4

Think About It

Buried and raised, we walk as those who are forgiven and, therefore, freely forgive.

- from *The Living Church*, 2023



*Stained-Glass
Tryptich of Tryptichs:
Parting the Red Sea,
Receiving the Torah at
Mount Sinai, The
Temple in Jerusalem |
Chic Bee/Flickr*

† There Are No Loopholes

Matthew 18:21-35

It is obvious from Peter's question that he is looking for a loophole and the offer of seven "get out of jail free" cards appears quite generous, especially if the seven times "sins against me" is for the same offense. Seventy-seven times must have come as quite a shock and the parable that follows does not soften the blow. Forgiving a brother or sister from the heart is not an option and there are no loopholes. I don't know if a purgatory like punishment is the method of payment for those who have racked up a lifetime of debt by withholding forgiveness. If it is, a good bit of the church is in trouble, but then why not, for the church profits from the business of conditional forgiveness. That, of course, negates the cross of Christ and means payment is still required by adherence to the law, even if it is the law of love. Or in other words, same tune different verse. On the other hand those who count on the cross to forgive them and yet withhold mercy from others live in a prison of their own design from which they can never escape. Truth is if we apply this parable to ourselves we too cannot escape the sentence of torture. None of us are innocent. The reason we don't forgive is because like the wicked slave we don't value being forgiven. But if we are finally and fully convicted of our hopeless situation we will stop pleading for more time to make good on promises we cannot keep and stop requiring others to do what we cannot. Or in other (and better) words, "The quality of mercy is not strained, it droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blest: It blesseth him that gives and him that takes." William Shakespeare - *The Merchant of Venice*



† Prayer as We Search for a New Rector

Almighty God, you know the needs of your church in every place: look graciously upon us, the people of St. Paul's Parish, and grant us the guidance of your Holy Spirit as we seek a new Rector for this parish.

Jesus, you have blessed and sustained us through the past 238 years. We ask that you continue to lead us, stretch us, and direct us, in our search. Raise for us a priest and pastor who will boldly proclaim your Gospel, faithfully administer your sacraments, and serve your people with love and compassion, that we may continue to grow in the likeness of Christ and be a beacon of love and hope to our community and the world.

Give us discernment, wisdom, and confidence in your timing. Guide the members of our Search Committee, as they labor to be faithful in seeking your will.

We pray for the life of our parish, that we may continue to be strengthened in our mission to transform lives, being Jesus' heart, hands and feet to our neighbors no matter where they are on their journey of faith.

Bless us with mutual trust and respect, courage, and foresight as you shepherd our community through its journey.

Grace us with continuous direction and inspire us toward genuine self-reflection.

All this we ask as we walk in your ways to the glory of your name. **Amen.**





Here is an update about St. Paul's ongoing food-related ministries serving our community:

Drive Thru Food Collection - occurs every other Wednesday from 11 am - noon. We have now held over 89 food drives since April 22, 2020! Last time our trucks delivered to the Jericho Food Pantry, Danbury and the Daily Bread Food Pantry in Danbury.

Our next food collection will be next Wednesday, September 20th and will support the St. James' Episcopal Church, Danbury and their Daily Bread Food Pantry, and the Jericho Food Pantry in Danbury.

Thank you all for your ongoing generosity and to the many volunteers who have helped to load the trucks and deliver food to the pantries.

Next Drive-Thru Food Collection

Wednesday
September 20th

*Help us,
Help others*

11 am to Noon



If you would like to request Altar flowers for a particular Sunday in Memory of a friend or loved one, please fill out an envelope located in the back of the church or send an email request to dszen@yahoo.com or contact David Szen.



**Altar
Flowers**

† Host Homes and Transportation Needed

Bishop Todd McGregor, who lives in Florida, will be our visiting celebrant and preacher several Sundays in October. We are going to need a two host homes.

Bradley Airport transportation is also needed for each of two weekends. The first date is October 7th & 8th. The second is yet to be determined.

There is a sign-up sheet on the back table or contact Joyce Sarver at jsarver13@comcast.net.

Please prayerfully consider volunteering. Thank you.



THE SOBER THINK TANK AND LUCKY ORPHANS HORSE RESCUE COMMUNITY SUPPORT CELEBRATION AND CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT!!!

PEOPLE HELPING HORSES HEAL PEOPLE!!!!

Join us for a fun night on the farm meeting horses, listening or dancing to music, having some delicious food, meeting new people, joining in or watching the cornhole tournament, and just hanging out. Learn about the services we offer to Veterans, First Responders, People in Recovery, The Juvenile Corrections Facility, Youth Development, and more!!!



CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT

TROPHY AND PRIZE WILL GO TO
THE 1st PLACE TEAM

Sign up by emailing Gordy at
thesoberthinktank@gmail.com with
you and your partner's name. Singles
will be paired up at the event.

FREE EVENT

FOOD FOR SALE

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 22ND
FROM 6PM TO 10PM

FOOD TRUCK, MUSIC,
MINI PONY KISSING
BOOTH, AND MORE!!



FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 22nd
2699 NY-22 #334,
Dover Plains, NY 12522

thesoberthinktank@gmail.com
203-461-2412
<https://www.luckyorphans.org/>



by Kirsten Peterson, Organist & Choirmaster

Greetings!

Harold Burleigh (1866-1949) was a noted American composer, arranger, and singer. Growing up, he learned many traditional spirituals and slave songs from his grandfather, Hamilton Waters, who had been a slave before purchasing his freedom for \$55 in 1835. When Burleigh was 26, he was accepted to the National Conservatory of Music on scholarship, and to make ends meet, took up odd jobs including cleaning the floors of the conservatory at night where he would sing the spirituals with his beautiful baritone voice while mopping the halls. His singing caught the attention of the director of the conservatory, the Czech composer Antonin Dvorak (1841-1904), who asked Burleigh to enlighten him on this little known body of American music. Dvorak stated: "In the negro melodies of America I discover all that is needed for a great and noble school of music."

Burleigh's career as a composer and arranger resulted in some 200-300 songs, many of them arrangements of his beloved spirituals. In 1914, he became a founding member of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) which is still an important institution among songwriters today. As a baritone, he was frequently employed as a soloist around New York City. Two notable positions he held: the only African American to sing in the synagogue choir of Temple Emanu-El and a soloist at St. George's Episcopal Church. In the latter case, most of the all-white congregation stood by the popular practice of prohibiting Black worshippers, but the deciding vote to allow Burleigh in was cast by the financier J. P. Morgan (1837-1913).

One of Burleigh's tune adaptations is featured in our hymnal under the tune name McKEE, a spiritual that was known by the name "The Angels Changed My Name" of which a verse appears below:

*Verse 1: I went to the hillside, I went to pray,
I know the angels done changed my name.
Done changed my name for the coming day,
Thank God, the angels done changed my name.*

*Chorus: Done changed my name for the coming day,
I know the angels done changed my name.
Done changed my name for the coming day,
Thank God, the angels done changed my name.*

Burleigh chose the name McKee in honor of the rector of St. George's Episcopal Church: Rev. Elmer McKee. In our hymnal, the tune is paired with words by John Oxenham (1852-1941): "In Christ There is No East or West." Oxenham, by the way,



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Choir Notes

was a pseudonym for William A. Dunkerly. We'll be singing this hymn on Sunday for communion at the 8:00 AM service.

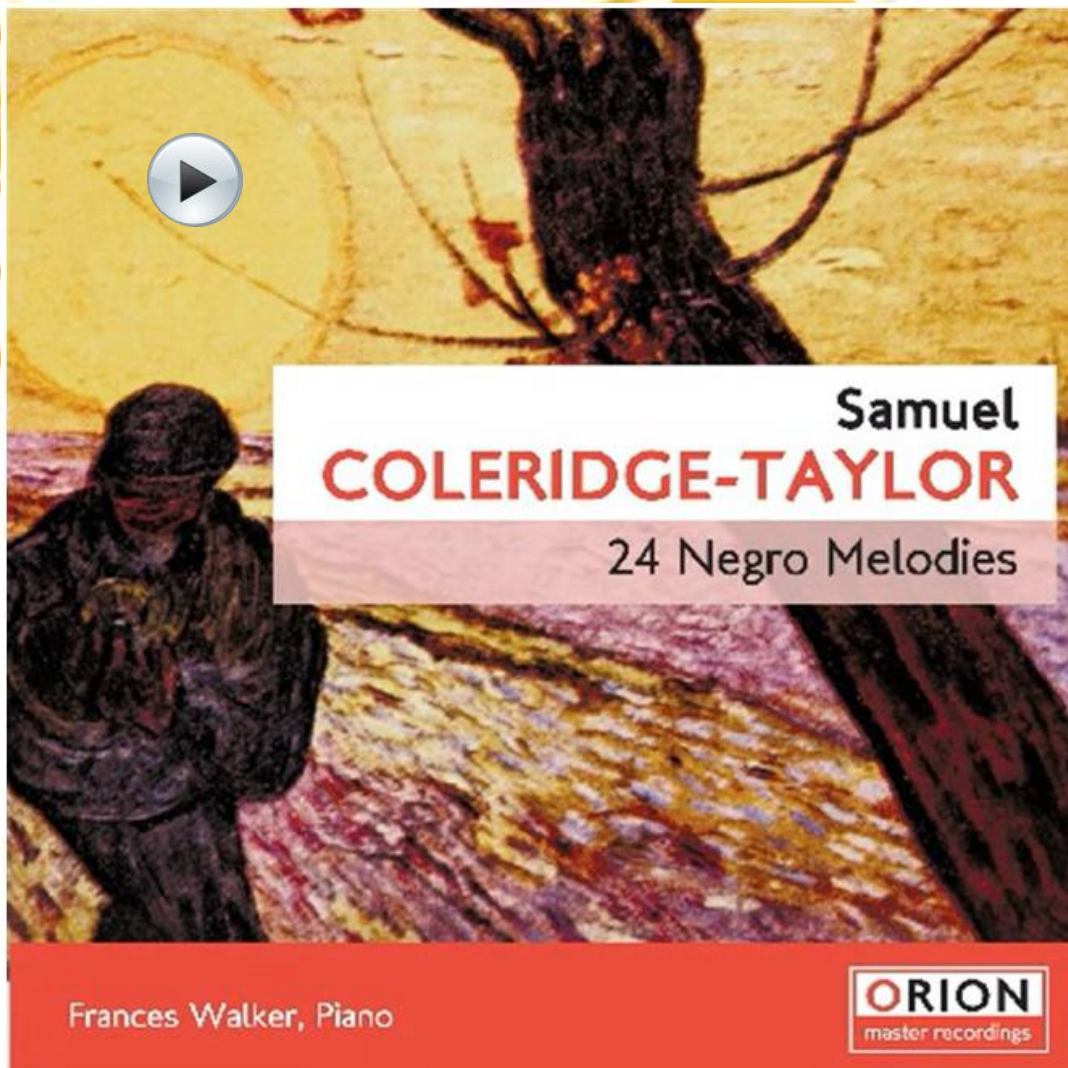
The spiritual "The Angels Changed My Name" is not as popular today as it was in the late 19th/early 20th centuries. Burleigh was not the only one that was attracted to the tune. The British composer Samuel Coleridge Taylor (1875-1912), sometimes referred to as the "African Mahler," made a beautiful piano arrangement of the tune in 1905. I will leave that one with you today.

Back to Burleigh...his son moved him from Long Island to a retirement home in Stamford, CT where he died from heart failure in 1949. His funeral was attended by over 2,000 people at St. George's Episcopal in New York City, and his remains were buried in the town of his birth, Erie, PA.

Peace and blessings,
Kirsten



John Oxenham



† Barbara DeAnzeris - R.I.P.

"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?'"

(JOHN 11:25-26)

Dear Family of St. Paul's,

After a long illness, our beloved sister Barbara DeAnzeris has gone home to be with her loving Father and our Savior Jesus Christ.

Barbara was a long standing pillar of faith in our community, and persevered in many years of service at our parish. She served on our Vestry and co-chaired our missions committee paving the way for the gospel to be spread throughout our community and the world at large.


In the midst of her personal trials, Barbara radiated the love, hope, and joy of Jesus Christ. She is an inspiration to us all.

We pray that our Lord will comfort her husband Michael, and her sons Michael and Christopher, and their families in this time of grief.

May Barbara rest in peace, and rise in glory, in the nearer presence of God.

In Christ's love,
Lois & George, wardens



 Do you love to sing? Join our worship choir this fall! Rehearsals are every Thursday, evening at 7:30 pm in the sanctuary. All are welcome.

Choir Rehearsals Resume

Gifted!

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.



1 Peter 4:10 use www.hearlight.org

† Transforming Stewardship

"For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's"

- ROMANS 14:8

This is the essence of stewardship – everything we have and everything we are is a gift from God. We aren't "owners" of anything, we are merely "stewards" of the gifts that God has given us, especially our very own lives. Pray to God, daily, and ask Him how He wants you to use the gifts He has given you.

† *Art in the Christian Tradition*

Parable of the Unforgiving Servant,

by Claude Vignon (1593-1670)

Oil on canvas painted in 1629,

© Musée des Beaux-Arts de Tours

Our painting from 1629 by Claude Vignon depicts the king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants as in Sunday's Gospel reading. We see the king leaning backwards in a semi-relaxed pose. The wicked servant is being brought before him, held by two other lavishly dressed servants. Gold coins, collection books and debt sheets are lying in front of the king and take up almost the entire bottom half of the painting. Claude Vignon was born into a wealthy family in Tours, where the current painting is held. He likely travelled to Rome as early as 1609 when he was only 16 years old and formed part of the French community of painters there. We can clearly feel the Roman and Caravagesque influence of painting in our canvas.

It can be helpful to pay attention to the questions that others may have about our faith. We can always learn from others. This week we find such an important question on the lips of Saint Peter. He asks Jesus, 'Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me?' He could have simply asked: is there a limit to forgiveness? Peter proposes an answer to his own question, 'Seven times.' In the Jewish tradition, the number 'seven' was the symbol of



perfection. Peter must have been confident that the answer 'seven' would have been acceptable to Jesus. Instead, Jesus answers, 'Not seven but seventy-seven times.' Poor old Peter was probably sorry he had ever asked the question in the first place! As so often, Jesus explains himself by telling a story, this time about the wicked servant, as depicted in our painting.

The first part of the story is one of absolute forgiveness. The master simply cancels the debt. Jesus is suggesting that there is nothing calculating about God's forgiveness. God is simply incredibly generous. The second part of the story suggests that receiving God's boundless forgiveness requires us to pass on that forgiveness to others. In this, the servant failed. And that why he was judged: having received forgiveness, the servant refused to pass it on. For that he was judged.

† Vestry Meeting August 9th



Opening: Warden George Stowell opened the meeting at 7:31 with Warden Lois Hunt leading the prayer.

Managing the Transition Journey: Dan Bacon led a discussion of how to manage the transition journey. Change is a fact of life and sometimes it comes as a welcome relief, but sometimes it shows up like an unwelcomed guest. Whether imposed or chosen, change creates difficulties for most of us. Change is external, but transition is the emotional process that people go through as they move from the old situation to a new situation.

As leaders seek to implement change they often overlook or minimize the need to help people through the transition process. Most leaders imagine that transition is automatic, that it occurs simply because the change is happening. However, without careful attention to transition needs, change can fail. Not only leaders, but all of us as team members have important contributions to enabling each other to manage the many transitions that inevitably come when organizational change occurs.

A couple of months ago we were introduced to a big change here with leaving of Fr. Joe. What are some of the things that might

What do people fear that they will lose in the transition?

Bill: The sense of family and the way Fr. Joe communicated.

Lois: The new PIC will have their own way of doing things.

David: As long as our new PIC believes that Jesus Is Lord, then we will continue on the path that we have been on in the past.

Gordy: The communication must come in both directions, Vestry to the Parish and Parish to Vestry.

Three types of people when confronted with change:

- **Conservers:** Prefer predictability, prefer current circumstances over the unknown, focus more on details and routine, more comfortable with gradual change than radical change, will change if it maintains the current structure.

- **Originators:** Prefer more rapid and radical change, when possible, like to challenge existing structure and systems.

- **Pragmatists:** Take a more middle-of-the-road approach, will support change when change seems workable and necessary, results oriented, practical, and flexible.

Vestry Minutes



There are four P's that help in implementing new beginnings:
1. **Purpose** – Beginnings must make sense. Why do we have to do this? Learn to describe the change and why it must happen and do so succinctly in

change in the near future?

Jim: Under the new process the Vestry will be the Search Committee. What type of Priest-in-Charge are we looking for, pastoral, administrator, etc.?

Darin: Fr. Joe helped me grow spiritually. He was a great support, and his sermons were wonderful.

Gordy: Recently I have had parish members speak to me about a lack of transparency. Things have changed, such as locking the doors during worship, and I believe this shows a lack of openness. There have been other changes that were not discussed with the parish.

George: The locking of the doors was proposed to the Vestry by the Safety Committee, it was discussed, was voted on, and approved.

one minute or less.

2. **Picture** - Show what the change will look like. Articulate the new attitudes and behaviors needed to make the change work. Model, provide practice in, and reward those behaviors and attitudes.

3. **Plan** – Step-by step, how will we get there? Make the plan as simple as possible. Be sure that the details of the change are planned carefully and that someone is responsible for each detail.

4. **Part** – What part everyone needs to play to help us move forward. Showing practical steps or actions each person involved in the change can positively contribute to the transition / change process.

(Continued on page 13)

Vestry Minutes

(Continued from page 12)

The **June Vestry meeting minutes** - approval were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: Chuck reported that June was a strong month for both income/expenses and our mutual funds. The month of June had a surplus in both current month and YTD. The income surplus for June YTD was \$11,658. July was an average month for both income/expenses and our mutual funds. The Mutual Funds for 2023 was a strong month with a YTD basis we still have a gain of 6.0%. We have paid ahead on the Mission budget up to 75%.

Committee/Ministry Reports: Property Committee: Minor Items: - Speakers have been taken out of the tower. - Plaque that fell off the Memorial Garden wall has been repaired. - Bell tower louvers have been replaced and painted. - AC filter has been checked and it is clean.

Major Items: - Replacement of roof has been discussed for the past two years. The question is whether we should continue to repair the roof or replace the roof. By the next meeting we will have three (3) proposals for replacing the roof. The Vestry has agreed to give the Property Committee approval to move forward in getting the three quotations.

Warden's Report: - George stated that Supply Clergy has been scheduled through the end of the year (except for Dec 17th and 24th) for both the Sunday services and the Wednesday Healing Service. - Each of the clergy are reviewed and prayerfully assigned to each of the open weeks. - Sunday School teachers are needed for this year. - Sunday School Registration will be on Sunday September 10th, with a launch on Sept 17th. - Some of the day-to-day that we review: The fire marshal came with a surprise inspection, a septic system back up, Mitchell Oil came to clean the furnaces. - Fr. Jim Wheeler is great and has been helping tremendously during this transition period. - Steve Nagy has filled in to do an internment in NJ for a St. Paul's parishioner. - Vicki Palmer's husband called and thanked us for the food that was being delivered by Lyndon & Mary Thomas. He told us that he has support and has people helping him.

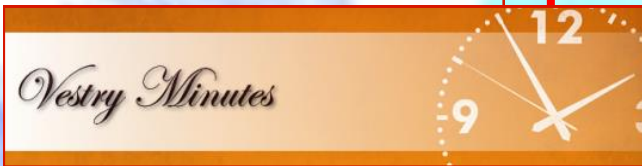
Old Business:

Vestry Reading: *A Miracle in Darien*

Lois: We took many of our practices from St.

Paul's Darian. "God doesn't want your money if He doesn't have your heart."

Jim: In reading these chapters, it shows how St. Paul's Brookfield mirrors that of St. Paul's Darian. The chapter on money, having a faith budget, is the only way it really works.



Demographics Parish Research Survey:

Waiting for the website to be launched .

•**Safety Committee** - George B has nothing more to update.

•**Safe Church** All vestry members are required to complete the course every 3 years. Over half of the Vestry has taken it.

New Business:

• Parish Meeting with Diocesan Transition Minister (DTM) August 27th.

• The Parish Meeting to gather input for Transition will be held on Saturday morning, September 16th at 9:30 to 11:30. This will give us sufficient time to work through the discussion points. The topics will be questions that will bring up the discussion points needed to get to know ourselves. Chris Goodman will be leading the meeting. This data will go into our profile at St. Paul's, which will define who we are as a congregation.

• Memorial Garden Rates have been requested by the Memorial Garden Committee to be increased. The current fee for the in-wall is \$500 and \$350 for the inground. It is being proposed to increase from \$500 to \$750 for in-wall and \$350 to \$500 for inground. The Vestry has agreed to the increase its rates starting January 1, 2024.

• New Website will be launched on Labor Day. Tithely is the software platform that was chosen for the new website. Kwan Stowell has been the lead person developing the website and has dedicated many hours in the process. The St. Paul's Tech Team will meet to confirm that the website will allow all online services. The Vestry has approved the website as it stands.

Closing: The meeting with prayer at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
David Williams, Clerk

† The Only Question that Matters

Romans 14:1-12

Vegetarians might have a quarrel or two with the apostle Paul over who is the weaker brother or sister, after all it's not easy to be vegetarian at a Texas BBQ joint. Thank God for pickles! Of course vegetarians take a little bit of ribbing in a place like Texas but maybe not the same as in the early church where "you are what you eat" were fighting words. Centuries of animosity between Jew and Gentile did not disappear overnight. If anything the differences that could largely be avoided through segregation were now inescapable. So Paul reminds them that they are no longer defined by their personal piety for they all belong to the Lord who welcomes Jew and Gentile alike. That is the part we miss when we elevate one form of piety above another without recognizing that the only question that matters is does it please the Lord. Of course what really pleases the Lord is when we live in harmony with one another which in the end is the highest form of praise.



to be seen
point of view.
Forgive ['fə'grɪv]
give up all claims
sometimes with
objective (acc
nerve

Who says stewardship has nothing to do with anything but money? This story clearly tells us that stewardship and forgiveness are interwoven.. Jesus reminds us that the faithful steward is the one who cares so much for others that they are able to forgive - even when they might feel they are owed much!

✠ This Date on the Church Calendar

Thursday, September 14th

Holy Cross Day

The historian Eusebius, in his *Life of Constantine*, tells how that emperor ordered the erection of a complex of buildings in Jerusalem “on a scale of imperial magnificence,” to set forth as “an object of attraction and veneration to all, the blessed place of our Savior’s resurrection.”

The overall supervision of the work - on the site where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre now stands - was entrusted to

Constantine’s mother, the empress Helena. In Jesus’ time, the hill of Calvary had stood outside the city; but when the Roman city which succeeded Jerusalem, Aelia Capitolina, was built, the hill was buried under tons of fill. It was during the excavations directed by Helena

that a relic, believed to be that of the true cross, was discovered.

Constantine’s shrine included two principal buildings: a large basilica, used for the Liturgy of the Word, and a circular church, known as “The Resurrection” - its Altar placed on the site of the tomb - which was used for the Liturgy of the Table, and for the singing of the Daily Office.

Toward one side of the courtyard which separated the two buildings, and through which the faithful had to pass on their way from Word to Sacrament, the exposed top of Calvary’s hill was visible. It was there that the

solemn veneration of the cross took place on Good Friday; and it was there that the congregation gathered daily for a final prayer and dismissal after Vespers.

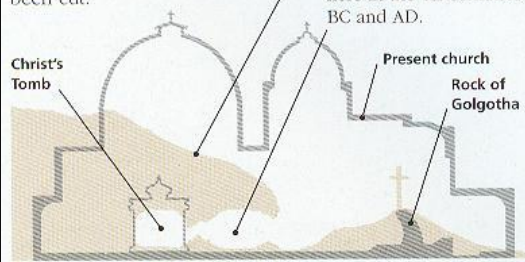
The dedication of the buildings was completed on September 14, 335, the seventh month of the Roman calendar, a date suggested

SITE OF CHRIST’S TOMB

In the first century AD, this site consisted of a small, rocky rise just outside the city walls and a disused stone quarry into whose rock face tombs had been cut.

The hillside was dug away in the 4th century to allow a church to be built around the tomb.

Burial chambers existed here in the 1st centuries BC and AD.



by the account of the dedication of Solomon’s temple in the same city, in the seventh month of the Jewish Calendar, hundreds of years before (2 Chronicles 7:8–10).





✠ Making Sense of God's Guidance Can You Trust a Group to Decide? (Part 3)

Last week we looked at the importance and need to make decisions with the appropriate support of the community. Making good group decisions, however, is a challenging and risky process. Based on recent research, the track record for corporate America isn't so good. Business decisions are often flawed, and one study of over 2,200 executives revealed that the majority felt bad decisions were as frequent as good ones. Another study of 20,000 business leaders found that 40% of their senior-level hires failed within 18 months. More than half of teachers in the US quit their jobs within four years. What's missing? While analysis is helpful in making good decisions a solid process is even more important. That process must include both objective and subjective elements. I'm convinced that for good decision making to take place in parish ministry that will lead to God's best, that process must also be healthy.

Group decisions made by Christians are not made in a vacuum. Obviously, things like church polity, organizational size, and culture, along with generational value differences will play a significant part in shaping group process. It is also important to remember that ultimately there is no universally correct way of making decisions. While many factors play a part in shaping organizations and their decision-making styles, it seems clear that there are basic biblical principles that apply to any group process when seeking to discern God's best for an issue. Let's begin by looking at a case study on decision-making from Acts 15 when a historical decision was made.

What unfolds in Dr. Luke's report on the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 is an illustration of an effective group process. As many Gentile believers were coming into the church,

several traditional Jewish believers demanded that these new converts be circumcised. The argument about this issue resulted in what has been called the first church council.

This was no small difference of opinion. The Greek words here for sharp dispute and debate (15:2) convey the idea of great strife, discord, and a lack of harmony. In other words, it was apparently a heated discussion with emotions running high. Amazingly, there was a happy end to what could have otherwise been a very sad story. How then did this gathering of people with very different perspectives come to unity on a vital issue? What were the key factors that helped them discern God's direction at this point? What can we learn from their experience?

1. The right people were present. Although some believers from the party of the Pharisees had the opportunity to present their grievance and

demands, only the key decision makers (apostles and elders) were actively involved in the discussion and debate, although many others were apparently in the audience (15:12, 22). It is a basic but an important principle to remember that good decisions usually come when the right people are involved. By right people, I mean those who have spiritual and experiential maturity plus the authority to make decisions of this magnitude. This debate required those present who were both aware of the issues and open to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Personal preparation to be a participant in any group decision is always important. By preparation I'm referring not only to the issues, but the need for spiritual preparation as well. When our hearts or minds are distracted, or we are not really in tune with the Lord at that point, our contribution will likely be sub-par and perhaps even counter-productive! Good group process or practices are important but, in the end, they are no substitute for personal preparation.

2. They shared the right values. While nothing is said in Acts 15 directly about group

(Continued on page 17)

(Continued from page 16)

Can You Trust a Group to Decide?

operating values, we can only assume that as apostles and elders who in the end submitted to godly wisdom and the application of Biblical truth, that there was an underlying willingness to listen to each other and seek God's will collectively. Their corporate willingness to even bring it to a forum for group discussion and discernment demonstrates a degree of shared values (i.e., God's perspective is important).

Why are values important? What do they mean to an organization? Ministry strategy and direction always flow out of our values. Core values and beliefs are the starting point for all that we seek to accomplish and how we will go about doing it. Even vision and mission spring from biblical core values. Leaders often focus so strongly on vision casting and strategy that clarifying core values seems like an afterthought. But bringing values to the forefront and focusing on how the group will function and what priorities it will follow will set the pace for how any group can discern God's best for them.

You'll be happy to know that St. Paul's vestry meetings are guided by several key values. First, before discussion on issues and any decisions are made, considerable time is spent in sharing Scripture and group prayer. Seeking the Lord must come before making decisions. Secondly, key decisions are made based on consensus rather than a majority vote. Behind that value is the conviction that when God is truly guiding, then His will should be discerned by all. If not, then it is a call to wait and prayer further, rather than forcing a decision which may turn out to be misguided.

Another critical part of preparation is building trust within the group. If there is not buy-in to these shared convictions or values and a willingness to hold each other accountable, then discernment of God's best and the process of seeking guidance will be hindered. All this to say is that each of us needs to be the "right kind of person" to make a meaningful and helpful contribution to the decision-making process. It is a gathering of the "right people" then that makes discerning God's will truly possible. Without total ownership of core values, a leadership group or team is in danger of drifting or stalling due to internal conflict or competing agendas.

3. They allowed adequate time for focused sharing and discussion on the issue. The problem before this Jerusalem Council was no small one and serious effort must be taken to truly discern the way forward. Luke states briefly that, "The apostles and elders met to consider this question" (Acts 15:7). In other words, these key church leaders did not try to run from the threat or ignore it, but faced head on what was most important for the sake of world evangelism at this point. Because the problem was major, there was "much discussion" (meaning enquiry, debate, or questioning). Following this prolonged period of interaction which Peter wisely permitted, steps are taken now to bring things to closure.

4. They listened to the word of wisdom that would help confirm the discernment process. James was a man of prayer and well-grounded in the Scripture. Sensing the Holy Spirit's prompting he seeks to bring to closure the debate with this simple but profound statement, "It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God." (Acts 15:19). There comes a point when someone needs to state what seems to be the conclusion based on all that has gone on before. Note, however, that James does not use the apostolic declaration of "thus says the Lord," but rather it is his considered decision that they should act in the following way. This story illustrates the fact that leadership discernment involves listening with love and attention both to God and to others, carefully examining the facts or data, and sensing what God is saying through Scripture.

Summary. It would be naïve to think that every major decision for an organizational change is welcomed and cheerfully embraced by all. Change doesn't come easy for many of us. It isn't so much that we fear change but rather our perceived loss that makes the change process difficult. Even though in Acts 15 it appears all was well, there was likely some grumbling and resistance as the implications began to sink in. However, the test of a godly decision led by the Holy Spirit is usually confirmed in the long run rather than just by initial popular acclaim or even immediate backlash. Nevertheless, one necessary part of the process is to help those affected understand both the rationale for the change and how the decision was actually made.

- Dan Bacon



25 Stories for 25 Years

Todd & Marni
Baggett

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HOPE (MONTHLY DONORS)



"We give to Jericho because we believe in its mission. Having worked in youth ministry for a number of years, we understand the difference mentoring can make in a child's life. We see the difference Jericho is making in the Danbury area and want to be a part of it.

Giving to Jericho is an investment in the future....one child at a time. What better way to put your money to work?!"



Let's Learn and Work Together: Stop Human Trafficking in Connecticut

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

10:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

Hosted By

ST. JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH
25 WEST STREET
DANBURY, CT 06810

9A.M. On-site registration opens. Coffee, Tea and More donated by Trinity Christian Tabernacle

9:45 A.M. Conference Welcome

10 A.M. Keynote Speaker Rob Morris, Co-founder Love146

Rob Morris is the CEO and co-founder of Love146, an international human rights organization working to end child trafficking and exploitation. Prior to co-founding Love146, Rob worked with Mercy Ships International directing training schools at the International Operations Center. He has lectured and taught in over 20 countries on issues of justice, compassion, and human rights.

11 A.M. Discussion: Questions and Answers

Underground New England is a faith-based, non-profit organization that provides ministry and support in the anti-trafficking movement. UGNE acts as a catalyst in unifying faith-based communities to transform and heal the culture of sexual exploitation in Connecticut and to see a God-shift in a way that compels change: Awareness, prevention, and direct support for victims and survivors.

11:45 A.M. Lunch and Round Table Conversations

Enjoy lunch and gather ideas and possibilities for going forward BEYOND the Conference close at 1:00 P.M.

Suggested \$5.00 donation at the door

Nearby parking available

Proceeds donated to Underground New England

Eventbrite Registration Link Below:

<https://cimn-missionevent.eventbrite.com>

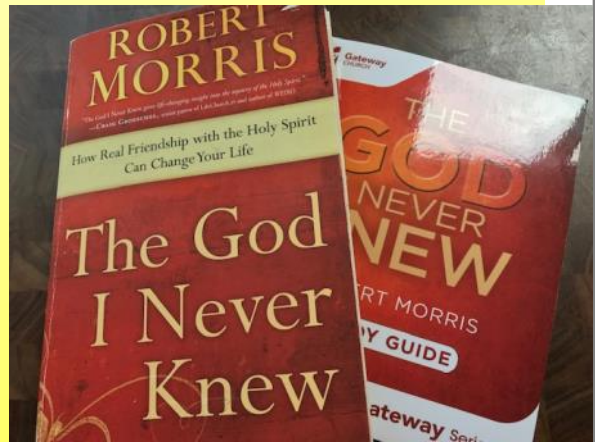
Sponsored by Companions in Mission Ministry Network

of the EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN CONNECTICUT

Thank you to St. James' Episcopal Church, Danbury CT and Trinity Christian Tabernacle, Danbury CT

† Ladies Tuesday Morning Bible Study

The Tuesday morning Ladies Bible Study is beginning a study of “*The God I Never Knew*” guided by Robert Morris’s book. All women are invited to join us, Tuesday’s from 9:30 to 11 am, in person (the Guild Room) and through Zoom. Contact Mary Beth Durkin durkin.mb@gmail.com for the Zoom link and further information.



† Wednesday Service Growing in Popularity

Our mid-week Wednesday morning 10 am Holy Eucharist with healing prayer has been growing consistently. With live music and a brief homily, this service is just what you need to sustain you through the week. Come join us and check it out or watch on YouTube Live.



† Praying for the 1/3 of our world that are still unreached with the Gospel.

Somali

Country: Somalia | Population: 13,875,000 | Language: Somali | Main Religion: Islam | Evangelical: 0.01%



The Somali people originated around 1200 in the Ethiopian highlands before growing in numbers and migrating south to Somalia. They consist of four main clans. The Somali are warriors and camel herders, and the overwhelming majority are Sunni Muslims. In recent times, Somalia has been plagued by droughts, famines, wars, malnutrition, and limited healthcare. The Somali language was not written down until 1972, and as such, most adults cannot read or write. Ask God to raise up missionary teachers and healthcare workers to demonstrate Christ’s love to the Somali. Pray the Gospel would be broadcast throughout Somalia in a faithful, culturally effective manner. Pray for God to soften their hearts towards the Good News.

† Memorial Garden Fees to Increase

Please note: The Memorial Garden fees for in-ground and wall niches will increase January 1st, 2024. Ground purchase will increase from \$350 to \$500; Wall niche purchase will increase from \$500 to \$750. This is the first fee increase in over 20 years. The fee includes the niche, opening and closing, service, engraved plaque and perpetual maintenance in our beautiful garden. For information please contact Mary Beth Durkin at durkin.mb@gmail.com.



† Sunday School Update!

SUNDAY SCHOOL begins Sunday, September 17th, with a gathering of **PARENTS** of Sunday School Students at 9:40 am in the Guild Room for registration. Parents, please fill out a registration form so we'll know each child's grade



in school and allergies, if any. You'll get some info on our teachers, classes and curriculum. There will be coffee and donuts for all and coloring pages, markers, and crayons for the kids.



† Bible Study for Families

The first and third Friday of each month there will be a Bible study for families. The gathering will start with dinner and fellowship from 5:30-6:30 and a Bible study for parents from 6:30-7:30. There will be an activity provided for any kids attending during the Bible study. For more information, or to RSVP (so we know how much food to bring) please contact Max Kronberg at (203) 216-4037.



COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Sep 17th	8 am	- Greeley's	10:30 am	- Switzer's
Sep 24th	8 am	- Polly Sorrentino	10:30 am	- Barbieri's
Oct 1st	8 am	- Roginski's	10:30 am	- Pinto's



**COFFEE HOUR
HOSTS NEEDED**

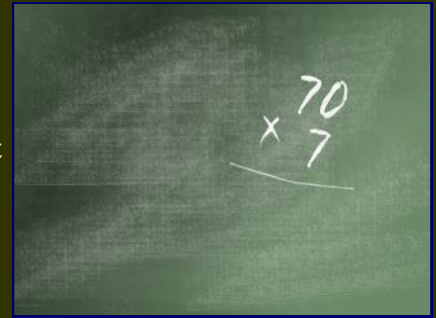
Contact Mary Allen at
203-775-6633 or
chamla@charter.net





Our Daily Bread - The *Our Daily Bread* devotional pamphlet for September, October & November is now available at the back of the church. *Our Daily Bread* contains a scripture verse and meditation for each day.

Not seven times, but seventy times seven" says Jesus about how often we should forgive others. How hard it is for us not to hang on to our hurts and (real or imagined) "sins against us." But if we truly want to live our lives in God, we need to use His extravagant model, and not allow the "energy leak" of nursing those grudges and hurts to affect our own serenity and acceptance.



SeeK not to grow in knowledge for the sake of applause and to enable you to dispute with others; but seek it for the benefit of your souls. - Jonathan Edwards

† Ladies Evening Bible Study



The Wed Evening Ladies Zoom Bible Study will start up again on Wednesday, September 13th from 7-8 pm and all are invited.

We will be studying prayers from the Bible, beginning with the prayers of David in 2nd Samuel and continuing with prayers from other kings and prophets in the OT. There is no homework, and there will be good discussions, so please feel free to join us and make new friends as we study the Bible together and seek to follow the Lord more closely. To be added to the weekly email with the zoom link, or with questions, please contact Carol Wheeler at cmeadwheeler@hotmail.com or call 203-525-0011.

The zoom link is the same every week:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4245653965?pwd=RXI4b3ZWS1p6TFpwQk8xMlh1NzY2Zz09>

† Recovery & Self-Reflection Group



Every Sunday evening at 7 pm in the Guild Room, Gordy Hiltz is convening a new Recovery & Self-Reflection group. It will be a



"fellowship meeting for those who are looking to make amends with past decisions by reflecting on where we've been, are now, and would like to be. This will be accomplished using topic guided discussions, increasing self awareness for our day to day actions, with the goal of being a slightly better version of ourselves from who we were the day before each and every day."



Forgiveness

by Mari-Anna Stålnacke @flowingfaith

“In anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from the heart” (Matt. 18:34-35). This difficult end to a parable on forgiveness holds in tension both a final judgment against the unforgiving and the claim that forgiveness should not be motivated by external threat. Rather, the command of God should be so internalized that forgiveness toward a brother or sister flows *from the heart*. By divine command, forgiveness is necessary. Inwardly, it is the will of God working, by grace, in the free will of men and women bound together in Christ.

The king in the parable who forgives the servant does so “out of pity.” The forgiven servant, however, grabs his debtor by the throat, refuses patience, and shows no mercy. Forgiveness, it seems, is something very close to compassion and empathy, an acknowledgment that the debtor is another self who, like every human, is burdened with debts that can never be fully and adequately repaid. What will a man give in return for his life? Forgiveness is a way of assuring that brothers and sisters in Christ remain in communion, and thus there is no limit to the number of times forgiveness may be offered. Acting “out of pity” simply is the normal and habitual condition of a healthy Christian body. For that reason, one who, having been forgiven, then refuses to extend forgiveness, is in violation of an essential part of life in Christ.

Forgiveness, to be sure, is difficult, complicated, and layered with subtleties when there is *something and someone* to forgive and the offense is *deeply serious*. God demands forgiveness, but God *gives the grace* by which forgiveness occurs, and *God gives time* for anger and sorrow to be fully felt by the person harmed. It is cruel, therefore, to stand in for God and demand that someone forgive when we lack the supernatural grace to make that happen. It is better, in the face of such suffering, to stand in solidarity and to feel pity that for now perhaps a person *cannot forgive*.

“Father forgive/release them, for they know not what they do.” Strangely, in the normal trials in which forgiveness is needed, the person released is not primarily the offending party, but the person offended. The grip of a past sorrow, hurt, offense, or even attack may with time and grace loosen and then free a person to go on with life, and with new hope. But, let’s be clear. Forgiving and forgetting do not belong together, if the latter means pretending that “it” never happened. Part of being released, however, may be a new freedom from an obsessive replay of previous hurt.

Look into the past. So much good flows into the present. So much sorrow and hurt spoil the life we might have. Let God do it. Let the God of storms breathe over the waters of the Reed Sea. “At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up, the flood stood up in a heap; the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea” (Ex. 15:8). “The enemy [your hurt] said, ‘I will pursue, I will overtake, ... I will draw my sword’” (Ex. 15:9). There is a power over which this enemy is powerless. “Terror and dread fell upon them; by the might of your arm, they became still as a stone” (Ex. 15:16). Emerging from baptismal water, we are forgiven and forgiving and free.

Look It Up

Read [Matthew 18:27](#).

Think About It

Feel deeply and honestly, and let freedom be.



† **St. Paul's Mission Committee**
Annual Request for Budget Line Items for Year 2024

"If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and if one of you says to them, go in peace, be warmed and be filled, and yet do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself." James 2:15-17

Saint Paul's Mission Committee serves the entire parish as a focal point for our mission work. We prepare an annual budget for Vestry approval. Items in this budget come from you, our parishioners! This is your opportunity to enhance your personal or family missions with the prayer, talents, and financial support of the entire parish!

As a sponsor of your Christian based organization, you are annually asked to complete the form at the end of this article. Additionally, you are expected to submit a "Sword Points" article. This is your opportunity to "put a face" on what we, as a Parish, are supporting.

We invite your active participation in this budgeting process as well as your involvement with St. Paul's Mission Committee. We meet first Thursday, monthly 7:00 in the Guild Room.

If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact a member of the Mission Committee: Dan Bacon, George Blass, Angela Haselwood, Lois Hunt, Joyce Sarver, Bill Schrull, Ron Switzer, Cigdem Usekes, Bonnie Wanzer, or Don Winkley.



Mission Organization: _____
Persons requesting prayer, physical or financial support _____

Our task is to sponsor those missions that are:

- ***Christ Centered***
- ***Meet the basic needs of our neighbors***
- ***Have a strong base of existing personal support by the individual making this submission.***

Briefly describe the purpose or scope of the mission or organization:

Is it Christian based, to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ?

To what extent do you recommend St Paul's should offer support?

Prayer Needs: _____

Financial Support: \$ _____

Physical Assistance: _____

Any other pertinent information for committee consideration.

Kindly return this form to the Mission Committee by October 29, 2023.



Camp Washington

October 6 - 8, 2023

Writing Into the Brink

A Writing
Workshop

with Davyne
Verstandig

Writing Into the Brink – a writing workshop this October 6-8 among the changing colors of the season for those interested in inking to the edge. Writing into the brink is a quest. We think, imagine, dread, regret and wonder in pieces so writing in pieces or fragments can bring us into the brink – of everything.

"Out on the edge you can see all kinds of things you can't see from the center." Kurt Vonnegut
"...it is not the actual sight or sound itself that matters, but the reverberations it makes as it travels through our minds. These are often to be found far away, strangely transformed; but it is only by gathering up and putting together these echoes and fragments that we arrive at the true nature of our experience."

"Echoes and Fragments" Virginia Woolf -from essay "*Impassioned Prose*"

Here we will also consider Imagination and Doubt as two creative aspects and write into the enigmas and paradoxes we are – perhaps even finding our own new territories. When you write examine your Intention.

\$360 per person. All Inclusive (single room & meals) Check in: 4pm Friday – Check out: noon Sunday

"Here I was able to visit my own personal and too long abandoned inner landscape through writing. I was inspired to remove accumulated life- debris through trusting "the ink" and the companionship of so many like-minded people." R. C.

"Sometimes, when given encouragement, we can write what we cannot speak. It happened to me working in one of Davyne's riting workshops." M.F.

"Davyne taught me to seek silence. Then I was free to hear - to write." H.T.

Register now at campwashington.org or call us at 860.567.9623

campwashington.org 860.567.9623 camp@campwashington.org

THE
Episcopal
CHURCH



September 17, 2023 – Pentecost 16 (A)

Episcopal Service Corps Program Spotlight: Plainsong Farm & Ministry

Plainsong Farm & Ministry is an Episcopal Service Corps program in Rockford, Michigan, dedicated to cultivating connections between people, places, and God. By making a place that nurtures belonging and the radical renewal of God's world, Plainsong Farm is a living laboratory where fellows can experiment with how to pray, belong, grow, rest, serve, and play.

Plainsong Farm is currently recruiting Corps members between the ages of 21 and 32 for its 2023-2024 program year. Over nine months, Plainsong Fellows will experience:



- A balanced life of prayer, feasts, play, rest, study, conversation, retreats, and work
- Immersion in regenerative agriculture and conservation practices for health and healing of all creation
- Weekly evening formation gatherings which include cooking farm-fresh meals, Christian scripture, hands-on activities, contextual analysis of power, possession, people, and place, both in history and today, and doing the dishes
- Conflict resolution coaching
- Monthly field trips
- Life in community with one another and the various intergenerational communities of Plainsong Farm
- Lots of cucumbers
- And embodied practice

Dates of service: January 14, 2024 to November 1, 2024

Weekly commitment: 32 work hours per week, 8 formation hours per week

Compensation: \$425 monthly stipend, housing on the farm, utilities, end-of-service award, health insurance, spiritual direction, and seasonal vegetables. This leads to a total estimated value of \$12,000.

About Episcopal Service Corps

Now in its 23rd year, Episcopal Service Corps (ESC) is built on the belief that change happens when we bring together diverse teams of committed and passionate young leaders ages 21-32 and support them as they tackle some of our nation's most difficult challenges. Find out more about Plainsong Farm at

<https://www.plainsongfarm.com/>. Learn about Episcopal Service Corps at

<https://episcopalservicecorps.org>, and apply today at <https://episcopalservicecorps.org/apply/>.



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MISSION TRIP TO AFRICA 2023

Kindly join me in being blessed by bringing Jesus to three African countries this October. Let us make a difference !

• Tanzania • Kenya • Uganda

I will be living with the people, eating and sleeping in their homes. Just like the disciples did.

(Entirely Scriptural, plus low expenses)

I will be traveling with a pastor from each country going out two by two. Also as the disciples did.

(Also quite Scriptural)

I will be working only with Christians that believe in working with each other at various churches.

(Jesus last prayer before the cross Jn.17:21)



Minister Bob Cutting
www.bobcutting.com
203 778-2672

We expect God to show up!

What qualifies me for Africa?

- I have lived humbly among the people in Honduras
- Helped, then directed Minutemen United, Christian recovery efforts after Hurricane Katrina.
- Visited Tanzania on a Mission Trip in 2018
- Certified in Critical Incident Stress Management by A. C. C. A. & Pending with B.G.E.E.
- Turned my Facebook account into a worldwide ministry for Christian leaders.



Here a choir sings in a church without a roof.
Hungry for Jesus?
This church grew to 200 in 3 months!



Scan this code and hear
our Kenyan Coordinator talk
about our upcoming visit.



The view out the windows is
always fantastic in the
back country.

Estimated costs:

International Airfare: \$1,500. Visas (3 countries \$600.)

In country airfares: \$900. Miscellaneous: \$300.

Any extra funds will be given to local Christians for Bibles in their native language(s).

Kindly join we me in beating these expenses.

Donations accepted at Go Fund Me. com. Tax deductible checks to:

Insight Ministries Inc. 50 Oak Ridge Rd., Bethel, Ct. 06801-1151

All donations of \$25. or more will be sent a copy of my new book

"MESSAGE MISSED, What is the Main Idea of Christianity?"



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Bruce Simon, Amy Boyce & Bishop David Kodia celebrate today. Aster Kronberg open presents tomorrow. Bake a cake for Bob Cutting on Sunday. Susie Case is a year older and wiser on Monday. Wednesday is the big day for Siem Brinn. Have a blessed day everyone!



RFB

Presents

COFFEE WITH JESUS

Forgiving them



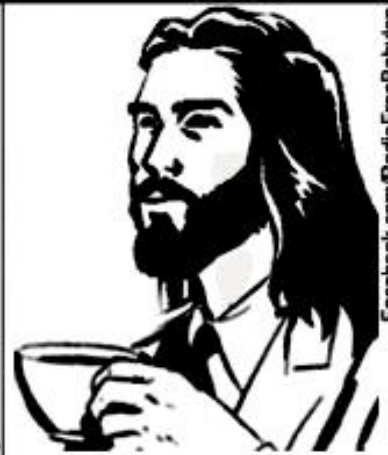
I forgive those who've done me wrong, Jesus, but I have a real hard time forgetting that they did.



So maybe you're not really forgiving them at all, Lisa.



Well, fine then! Tell me then, *how*...how am I supposed to just *let things go*?



For starters, you'll need to unclench your fists.

Facebook.com/RadioFreeBabylon

©Radio Free Babylon.® All rights reserved. I think we're more free than we let ourselves think. I think we've been hampered by tradition and custom to the point that we limit God, keep him in a box and make him abide by our rules. Maybe God is radical, maybe he's crazy creative and wanting to do things in a new way. Maybe he's like you, making you think of things that have never been thought of. Maybe it's him infusing your mind right now with new ways to look at old things.

✝ **New Sunday Adult Class**

New Series for Adult Christian Formation class. Starting Sunday, October 1st we will be starting a challenging and very relevant 8-week series that relates to each of us personally as well as to our relationships within the parish. Biblically based, we will explore three key topics: Managing Change, Building or Breaking Trust, and Managing the Inevitable Conflicts that come into our lives. Please join us each Sunday at 9:30 am in the Guild Room. The sessions will be co-facilitated by David Williams and Dan Bacon.



BROTHERS MCCLURG w/ GUEST PATRICK O'CONNORS

September 15, 2023 | 7:30 P.M.

\$15 tickets adv. | \$20 at door

www.communitycoffeehouse.org



Community Coffeehouse | 7 Madison Ave. | Danbury, CT 06810 | (203) 748-4972

† This Sunday's Readings

(Click on the red links for the readings)

Human and Divine Forgiveness

Exodus 14:19-31

In our first lesson we are shown how God delivered the Israelites from Pharaoh's pursuing army through a series of dramatic wonders and events. It is impossible to determine the degree to which ancient storytelling has embellished the account of the escaping Hebrew tribes, but it is certain that the success of the escape is attributed to divine intervention. Through God's evident intercession for the oppressed Israelites, the people come to fear and believe in the Lord and in the leadership of Moses, God's chosen prophets.

Psalms 114

A song of praise to the Lord, who has brought the people from Egypt, through the wilderness, and across the Jordan to the promised land.

Romans 14:1-12

In this reading Paul calls upon the Roman disciples to live with tolerance for one another's scruples, recognizing that everything can be done to honor the Lord with whom each Christian has a relationship. Especially should those who are strong and untroubled in their consciences respect the attitudes of the weak in matters such as observing certain days and eating meat. It is possible that there was tension in the Roman church between liberal Gentile Christians and more scrupulous Jewish Christians. God, Paul reminds them, is the one to whom final answer must be given, and the risen Christ is Lord of all.

Matthew 18:21-35

In the gospel lesson Jesus bids his disciples to offer a forgiveness which is, for all practical purposes, unlimited, and he tells a parable about a man who, although forgiven much, still himself had no mercy. Jesus has extended to all manner of people God's amazingly generous offer of acceptance into the kingdom. Those who have been so forgiven must show mercy to others. Their own forgiveness may otherwise be revoked.

Matthew 18:21-35

"Jesus is calling us to give up calculating offenses and forgivenesses; and instead to have a forgiving heart; a forgiven heart; a heart for forgiveness. This is a shift of ATTITUDE. But it is not an "anything goes" attitude. Forgiveness actually stands FOR some things; and therefore, does NOT stand for everything."

WHO ARE YOU CALLING?
MY CREDIT CARD.
I WANT THEM TO KNOW HOW
MUCH JESUS LOVES THEM.



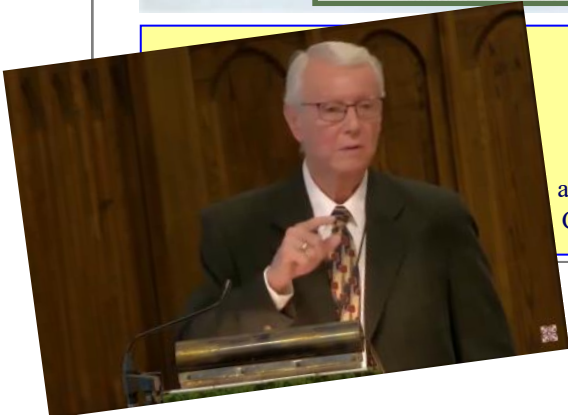
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MATTHEW 18:21-35

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† Sermon Shorts

Love Is a Debt that We Need to Continually Work Out. To replay all our sermons, audio and videos follow this link for the [Sunday Sermons](#). Check out our [Sermon Archives](#) as well.



† Your Prayers Are Requested For...

It is such an intimate time when praying for the health and well being of others and such a privilege. Our God is a God of unity, not division; of love, not of hate; of forgiveness, not resentment. With open hearts, bearing the pain of the world, let us beseech the God of love as we pray to the Lord for:

.....Joe Hock, Harlan Jessup, Jan Brochu, Ed Licence and other parishioners convalescing in extended care facilities.

.....[St. John's](#), Stamford; [Calvary](#), Stonington; [St. Mark's](#), Storrs.

.....Revival at St. Paul's and the greater Danbury area.

.....Children and children's ministries; and ministries for children with special needs.

.....Clayton Ferry, Barbara Hock, Jim Megura, Peter Scalzo, Jr., Gail, Doris, Karen, Beverly Hall, Robert, Eve, Roger, Fred, Cynthia, Rocky, Valerie, Geri, Arlene, David Williams, Heidi Pinheiro, Donna, Dale Mitchell, Larry Wanzer, Joe, Ruth, Jayne, Ken, Alex, Elana, and Veronika continued healing.

.....the people of [Ukraine](#); the people of the [Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka](#) Anglican cycle; the people of the [Republic of Guatemala](#); the bishop, clergy and laity of the Diocese of Abakaliki - The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion (Anglican Communion)); and our sister and brother members of the [Belarusian Greek Catholic Church](#).

.....For those people we have come to view as enemies.

.....[St. James' Episcopal Church](#), Danbury and their [Daily Bread Food Pantry](#), which is the recipient of our food basket collections during the month of September.

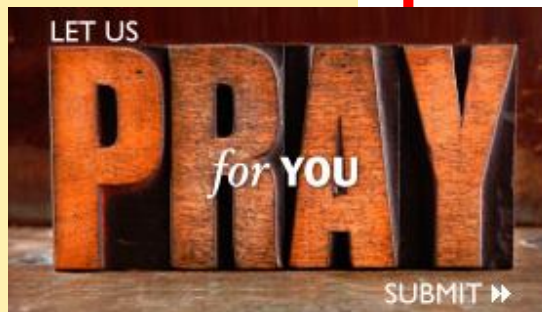
.....St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Danbury, a partner church of the Jericho Partnership.

.....Our missionaries, Will & Becky McLaughlin and their family, and their ministry in Cambodia; the Holy Spirit will provide them with words that communicate effectively in the Cambodian culture and language.

.....that we recognize everything we have and everything we are is a gift from God, including our very own lives.

.....The one third of humanity that does not have access to the gospel, for zealous preachers of the word, that by the Holy Spirit, they open the ears of their hearers to the good news of salvation and their eyes to the loveliness of God's wisdom.

.....[The Aged](#).



Theatre of Forgiveness



"How many times?"



Just For the Joy of It!

(And Christian Fellowship)

Random Fact of the Week!

Did you know ... that Australia is wider than the moon?



† It Takes An Editorial Board Contributors to Sword Points:



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Thanks to Peter Mason

HEY!

Ecclesiasticus 43:27 - We could say more but could never say enough; let the final word be: 'He is the all.' - 30 -