



THE EPISTLE

December, 2021



STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY NEWS

By now, we hope that everyone has become familiar with the theme from this year's Stewardship/Pledge campaign, "Every Perfect Gift" (James 1:17). You've become accustomed to seeing weekly reflections in the bulletins or posted on the parish Facebook page; and each Sunday, our Prayers of the People have included expressions of gratitude for our abundant gifts, '...which come from God above.'

Each of us has been invited to reflect on the abundant gifts, perfect gifts, with which we've been blessed, as individuals and as a church. The pledge campaign and pledge cards have also invited us to consider how we might share those gifts, our time, talent, and yes, our treasure, with our parish and our neighbors.

Along the way, the Stewardship ministry has grown in our understanding of our role, and the call to share our gifts not only within the church four walls, but in our daily lives and throughout the community. We reflect on, and are grateful for, the many ways that St. Paul's opens our doors, welcomes our neighbors, shares our gifts, and continues to build the parish? This work of the church would simply not be possible without the generosity of our members.

We are grateful for all of the gifts and pledges you've returned in response to our 2021 pledge campaign. And, we're grateful that the pledge season has not yet come to a close! If you've not yet returned your pledge card, we ask that you might have another look and return it with your intentions for the upcoming year. Although we occasionally receive pledge cards

throughout the year, for which we are also grateful, it is helpful if everyone can return the cards as early as possible. This will support the work of the vestry, as plans are being made for the upcoming year.

Finally, even if you've never returned a pledge card before, we hope that everyone would consider returning your card with your giving plans for next year. Perhaps you'll simply pledge to attend church more often, or perhaps pray regularly for the church and its ministries. Perhaps you'll make a pledge of financial support, regardless of the amount. Smaller or larger, we know that:

"Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of Lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." (James 1:17)

PLEDGE CAMPAIGN REPORT (AS OF DECEMBER 1, 2021)

- *A total of 120 households received the pledge packets and pledge cards.
- *35 Pledge cards had been returned
- *Financial pledges received was \$138,000

Vestry nominations

It's that time of year when we look for candidates to fill open Vestry positions. This year we will elect 3 new members to serve a 3 year term. The Nominating committee this year is out-going Vestry member TaMara Oertel, Tim Grant and Velecia Ford. Please see one of these people with your recommendations.



ST. PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Warden's Wisdom

Lord, take me where you want me to go; let me meet who you want me to meet; Tell me what you want me to say; and keep me out of your way. A prayer written by Father Mychal Judge who served as Chaplain for the New York Fire Department.

I am very excited. I have been waiting for an opportunity to work with Partners for Sacred Places since 2015 when I found their website and the work they had done with old historical churches. Convincing others of this organization's value to St Paul's has taken a long time. Now my dream has come true.

The contract has been signed. Walt Peake, Tim Grant, Fr Don and I have meet with the two consultants and we have set a timeline for our work. You will hear more about the opportunities to gather together as a congregation and with members of the community in early 2022.

I think it is only fitting to thank John Sargis who remembered his church family in his will. John would drive from East Lansing to attend 8:00 am service at St Paul's. When I asked him if he ever considered finding a new church home, he said he had looked at other churches but he felt more comfortable at St Paul's. I think it is a great tribute to his life that the money he left St Paul's will be used to find ways for St Paul's to remain a vital part of downtown Flint and a house of worship. Reaching out to neighbors and continuing to spread the kingdom of God is a goal worth pursuing for the next 150 years.

For the past 18 months we have experienced a different world. Not being able to attend church or have family gatherings has been difficult. Knowing that we will experience a new normal gives us an opportunity to look around and work together to create our role in the neighborhood.

I am sure we will experience fear and hesitation for the work we will be asked to do. But what an example we have at this time of year when we remember Mary and Joseph. Both said yes to God's request. Just like them we will need to pray for strength and guidance. Trust in God's plan. With open minds and hearts we will find more ways to love ourselves, our neighbors and the one who loved us first.

For His Sake, Barbara Mannor Senior Warden
seniorwarden@stpaulschurchflint.com

Notes and Keys

Advent began the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Prepare the way is a common theme of Advent, of course it is one of the basic tenets of Advent, to prepare for the celebration of the birth of Christ. Music is chosen with great care during this season to reflect those two ideas, prepare the way and get ready to celebrate the birth of Christ. When I looked up how long it took Mary and Joseph to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem, google says five days. My daughter is expecting a baby in December and to put her on a donkey at this time and travel 5 days journey, she would laugh at you! Walking that far would also produce an unladylike reaction.

We started last Sunday with *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*. The Jewish people had been waiting for 600 years for their Messiah to be born, that is a long time to hope and have faith that the prophets were telling the truth. Sunday, we sang the song written by Charles Wesley, the music was written by Rowland H. Prichard in 1830.

*Come, Thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.*

*Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.*

*By Thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne*

Source: [LyricFind](#)

<https://youtu.be/EgjoTlJQwJI>

I hope this season you find peace and joy in the expectation of celebrating the birth of Christ.

Holly Richardson, Director of Music
directorofmusic@stpaulschurchflint.com



ST. PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH



Christmas at St. Paul's 2022

Christmas Eve

5:00P.M. with Cantata

10:30P.M. Carols,

11:00P.M. Holy Eucharist

Christmas Day

9:30 A.M. Holy Eucharist



ST. PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

December 2021 Financial Update

As Christmas approaches and the end of the year is near, it is the time many people take to review their giving back to their community and the causes they believe in. At St. Paul's we look for our pledges for 2022 to come in before the end of the year. For those of you who have returned your pledges, thank you for your generosity. For those who have not yet returned their pledge sheet, we hope you will do so before the end of the year. We have received 35 pledges as of now, which is considerably behind where we were in years past at this time of year.

The Vestry approved a budget for 2022 with pledges totaling \$180,000. Pledges for 2022 received to date are more generous than in recent years, but are fewer in number, and we have not reached that goal of \$180,000 yet.

St. Paul's received a total of 59 pledges in 2021, totaling \$180,080. To date we have received \$164,900 of those pledges. In addition, we receive contributions from other members who did not return a pledge form. When the pledge and non-pledge contributions combined total \$177,000 to date. We will reach the \$180,000 or slightly surpass it. Thank you!

Pledging allows the church to understand what to expect during the year, and to budget accordingly. It is vital for planning. Some people pay their pledge in an annual sum once a year to take advantage of giving out of their 401K with a tax benefit, some pay once a year for convenience. Most people pledge weekly or monthly. More and more people have a monthly amount taken out of their checking account electronically, or by using a monthly credit card, both of which is convenient and safe. However, you decide to give, pledging an amount at this time of year is essential for St. Paul's good financial planning and stewardship.

Here is a snapshot of our Finances as of November 30, 2021:

		YTD as of <u>11/29/21</u>	2021 <u>Budget</u>	YTD as % <u>of Budget</u>
Revenue	Pledges	177,317	180,000	98%
	Other Inc.	206,415	306,056	67%
	Total Revenue	383,732	486,056	79%
Expenses	Service/Outreach	76,470	114,272	67%
	Worship/Education	2,842	3,300	86%
	Personnel	198,184	266,287	74%
	Building/Grounds	101,418	115,500	88%
	Admin	12,727	12,850	100%
	Total Expenses	391,641	512,209	76%
YTD Results	Revenue/(loss)	-7,909	-26,153	

Maggie Hart, Treasurer

George Gibson, Director of Finance



ST. PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

New Century Chorale
with Artistic Director
Steven C. Holovach

What Sweeter Music

**NEW
CENTURY
CHORALE**

With special guests
Davison Middle School Mezzo Voce Choir
December 12, 2021
4:00 pm
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
711 S. Saginaw St., Flint, MI.
Tickets at the door: \$12
Tickets available Online at: www.newcenturychorale.org or call 810-771-8255

Vestry Notes

At their November meeting, the Finance Committee presented the 2022 Budget which was adopted without objection. The Budget operates as the authority to maintain daily operations during the year and provides a reasonable estimate of expenses during the year. There is no doubt that the church needs to continue to limit spending in some areas and increase spending in others.

The budget is based mostly on income from investments and the pledges of devoted members of our community.

The Vestry approved the purchase of a new Live-streaming system which will be installed soon. The equipment will make it possible to broadcast on the Internet our services and other events from our nave. The broadcasts will be in high-density with sound from our own sound system. Three high-density cameras will be placed in the area of the loft. A laptop computer, a switcher and streamer will complete the project.

The Vestry also approved the purchase of a new computer for the Rector and Director of Music's Office.

The next meeting of the Vestry will take place following the Annual Meeting on January 23, 2022.



ST. PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Annual Meeting
of
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
9:00 A.M.
January 22, 2022