



Senior Warden Vestry Report

June 28, 2023

ROOTED IN ABUNDANCE!

The Episcopal Network for Stewardship (TENS) is using this passage from Jeremiah as the basis for its 2023 campaign materials and slogan, “Rooted in Abundance”. We are reminded that our work is indeed rooted in abundance and well-suited to thrive where we’ve been planted.

“Blessed are those who trust in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.” Jeremiah 17:7-8 NRSV

As I read this passage from Jeremiah, there are a few things that I think about:

- We aren’t told anything about who planted the tree! How did it end up by the water?
- The tree, although planted by water, had to do something. It wasn’t good enough to simply be there. The tree had to send out its roots, trusting the presence and abundance of the stream.
- The tree is not anxious or fearful of its sometimes-inhospitable climate or seasonal changes. If it did not become anxious or fearful, what did the tree do?
- The leaves of the tree stay green when the heat comes, and the tree doesn’t cease to bear fruit during a drought.
- Where do we see trust, abundance, and fruit in the life and work of St. Paul’s?

BUILDING COMMUNITY - UPDATES

1. Our average Sunday attendance has consistently grown since the pandemic! Last week, 51 parishioners and visitors attended our 10AM service.
2. Our Wednesday 12:10PM mass (Worship and Liturgy) is growing! Last week there were 17 communicants, including a number of guests, who gathered for worship near the Columbarium!
3. Likewise, the Wednesday Book Study (Education Ministry) is growing! The group has grown from 3 members to 14! They have outgrown the confines of the library and now meets upstairs in the newly reconfigured ‘Vestry/Conference Room’.
4. Glad Spirits Gardening Day/Group (Building and Grounds) led our spring clean-up event, with 13 parishioners and visitors helping to tidy up the yard. The group is also consulting local gardeners to develop a plan and budget for ensuring our best stewardship of the yard and gardens.
5. Our first ‘Video Night’ was a huge success, with an audience of 15! The film in June was ‘The Bible Tells Me So’, and attendance far exceeded expectations. We plan to make this a regular activity.
6. St. Paul’s was well-represented at Flint Pride (Diversity) with 18 volunteers working the St. Paul’s table. It was a lovely day of celebration and fellowship!



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7. Our 'Reverend Brown Ploughman' is still on offer at Hoffman's Deco Deli until June 30. If you haven't tried one, time is getting short. Proceeds benefit Crossover Outreach.
8. Our '150 Years at the Intersection' exhibit will continue to run at the Sloan Museum of Discovery until early September.
9. In the last month, we have also been blessed to welcome literally hundreds of our neighbors into our abundant space!
 - Artwalk: 187 parishioners and visitors!
 - Broadway Bound Theater Rehearsals: 55 students from across Genesee and Lapeer Counties
 - Burton Senior Center - Church Tour: 16 members of the senior center.
 - Child Welfare Society - Regular Meeting
 - Flint Residents for Stronger Neighborhoods: 20 Flint residents working to build community!
 - Greater Flint Toast Masters
 - Master Singers Rehearsal: 30 choir members
 - Michigan State University Internship - Church Tour: 10 students and faculty members
 - Pride Service (Diversity/Worship and Liturgy): St. Paul's welcomed 42 parishioners and neighbors into our space for our Second Annual Pride Service of Love.

ST. PAUL'S MINISTRY GOALS/PRIORITIES

- a. Within the first year, we will identify the specific elements of its mission in this next season of ministry. The visioning process will also identify measurable steps to reach the overall goal.
- b. Following the identification of mission, we will live into that vision by working through the measurable steps identified. Yearly reviews will ensure that the process is on track.
- c. St. Paul's, Flint will continue the work it has begun in building a deeper relationship with the community surrounding the church building.

As we focus on our ministry priorities and the work of each committee/ministry, my hope is that we will continue to find ways to collaborate, communicate, and share the fun with each other. Our respective roles as vestry liaisons, position us to facilitate this process and encourage teamwork among and between the various groups.

MINISTRY GROUPS - CHAPLAINS

It is easy to get caught up in the urgency of the day, anxiously working to respond to each perceived need or issue that arises. My hope is that we can continue to consider our place, our location, and recognize the abundance around us in our relationships with each other, our ministries, and our community. It is wonderful to see the various ministries collaborating and sharing ownership and investment in so many parish projects.



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Tim Grant has long served as the 'chaplain' for the Stewardship Ministry. Each meeting begins with prayer, a reading from scripture, and 3 or 4 reflection questions. The practice has helped the group to avoid getting caught up in the perceived urgency of planning, problem-solving, and brainstorming. The process creates room for members to recognize and remember that we are rooted in indeed abundance!

I know that most ministry meetings already begin with prayer and scripture, but it would be wonderful if each ministry group could identify its own 'chaplain' to lend some consistency between the groups. Tim has offered to help or provide materials for anyone who might be interested in serving as a ministry chaplain.

UPCOMING COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS, ACTIVITIES, AND EVENTS

Open Doors, Welcome Neighbors, Share Gifts, Build Community!

- a. Blood Drive at St. Paul's: July 7, 2023, 11AM – 4:45PM (Stewardship Ministry)
- b. Back to the Bricks: Concessions/Tours: 8am-4pm (Hospitality?/150th)
- c. Bobby Crim - Blessing of the Runners: August 26, 2023 @ 5:30am (Worship & Liturgy)
- d. 150th Anniversary Worship/Social: Sunday August 27, 2023 (All Hands)
- e. All Saints' at Glenwood November 5, 2023(Worship & Liturgy):

Respectfully Submitted: Walter A. Peake, June 28, 2023