



THE EPISTLE

THE NEWSLETTER OF SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 2011

From the Rector's Desk—

Father Michael Gorchov, Rector

Greetings!

In this issue of the parish newsletter I offer a quick peak into our recent vacation, and a couple more comments about doctrine.

Marianne and I had great time in Rangeley, Maine on our vacation. We, again, took along our Field Spaniels, Oscar and Babette, and our Maine Coon cat, Kirby. The dogs had a very good time swimming in Dodge Pond! They were really good about swimming out to get a toy and coming right back (for a treat). There was only one time when things got out of hand. We were down by the dock and the dogs were still on their leashes, when a female Mallard duck flew in, plopped down, and started paddling around about ten feet away. The dogs started barking and became just a tad excited. Oscar slipped his collar, but I was able to hold him by the scruff of his neck. Babette got loose and ran to the end of the dock, but didn't jump in because her leash was caught on a nail. Marianne quickly got to her and grabbed the leash, and we decided that was enough excitement for the afternoon! We didn't see the duck again, and the dogs went swimming a few more times before our vacation was over. Kirby declined our offers to take him swimming. And now on to other topics.

I was reminded recently about something that seems on first glance a bit odd: Down to this day the Latin and Greek titles for the Nicene Creed are *Symbolum Nicaenum* (Nicene Symbol) and *symbolon tes pistems* (Symbol of Faith). In the ancient Greek world a *symbolon* was half of a broken object, which when joined to the other half, became proof of the bearer's identity. So, by extension, the Creed became the symbol of Christian identity by which Christians could recognize each other.

In my last newsletter article I wrote about an ecumenical approach to achieving agreement on doctrine advanced by George Lindbeck in the 1980s. In his groundbreaking book, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*, Lindbeck proposed that by treating doctrinal statements as rules by which we speak about God, we might be able to discuss with other Christians the way church teachings are internally coherent, without getting bogged down in endless circular arguments about how something we say is true, is true, because we have always said it is true. Lindbeck uses the secular example of how Brits drive their cars on the left side of the road, and North Americans drive on the right. It would be fruitless indeed to spend much time arguing about who is right on that topic!

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**The next newsletter deadline is
Sunday, 23 October**



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But there are many things that various Christians can agree on, and they can agree not primarily because these are things that each group has always said they believed, but because they represent core truths about Christian Faith. Often, these are things that we can all agree should *not* be said about God.

Here is an example of how this approach might work:

The doctrine of the Trinity says that the Father and Son are co-eternal, and therefore the Church has insisted that the Creator of the universe is essentially loving, forgiving, and merciful. But the violence attributed to God in parts of the Old Testament seems inconsistent with the Christian belief in a loving Creator. In this case the doctrine of the Trinity reminds us that the Bible is a divinely inspired document that has been written and handed down through the generations by fallible human authors, and that the actions and motives attributed to God by these authors must always be interpreted through the offering of God Himself in the Life, Suffering, and Death of our Lord Jesus.

“He who does not love does not know God; for God is love.” 1 John 4:8, RSV.

Therefore, we must not say that God is violent or actively encourages violence.

I pray that you would take from these comments about the Nicene Creed, that by calling the Creed a symbol (or sign), the Church has never said that it should be received symbolically, but instead, truthfully as “statements of our basic beliefs about God.” (BCP, p. 851) and that by seeking agreement between Christian churches through dialogue, we all might learn more of what is essential to Christian faith and belief, so that we “may all be one.” (John 17:21)

May God bless you,
Michael+

Communications at Saint Paul's

Who's Who and How to Contact Them...

Parish Office Telephone: 518.273.7351

- Extension 1 Father Michael Gorchov, *Rector*
- Extension 2 Reverend Alicia B. Todaro, *Deacon*
- Extension 3 Brian Hoffman, *Organist & Choirmaster*
- Extension 4 Marjorie Roddy, *Gifts and Memorials*
- Extension 5 Louis Bannister, *Sacristan and Verger*
- Extension 6 Wendy Harris, *Bookkeeper*
- Extension 7 Upcoming Events Schedule
- Extension 9 Weather Related Cancellations

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The Deacon's Bench

The Reverend Alicia B. Todaro, Deacon

I am writing this on Labor Day weekend, which is, for most of us, the end of our summer activities. For me, this is the real new year's weekend. The official calendar starts in January, and liturgical year begins with Advent, but for those of us on an academic calendar, the new year really begins in September. This is the time of year I start a new school year and it is the beginning of new church activities. Here are some of the events planned for the fall.

The Mission and Outreach Committee will have 2 more face to face meetings after church on Sunday, 18 September and Sunday, 11 December. In September we will discuss our end of the year donations. Everyone is invited to make recommendations. Members of the Committee will research each proposal and present the final decisions in December. I expect we will have \$2000 to \$4000. We will certainly make donations for victims of Hurricane Irene, but we need to decide where to make these donations and how much to send.

Inn from the Cold 2011/2012 will run from 15 November through 15 April. This is one month less than in previous years to reduce costs for Joseph's House, but still meet needs in the coldest part of the year. Saint Paul's Church will host this program for the month of January 2012. Volunteers are ALWAYS needed. Many of us would like to help, but don't feel that we can spend the entire night at Inn from the Cold. Paul Dellio, Community Liaison/Volunteer Coordinator for Joseph's house, will be at St Paul's on Sunday, 25 September to talk to us about their program and other ways we volunteer.

Christian Education for Life, A Walk Through the Prayer Book. The next time you are in church, look at the "Book of Common Prayer". You will see the "thin grey line" where the book is used most often. If you open your book, it may fall open to this section: The Holy Eucharist in all its various permutations. The entire BCP contains 1000 pages, but we usually confine ourselves to those 30 pages, only 3% of this wonderful resource. Even cradle Episcopalians may not be aware of all that can be found there: daily prayer, daily and weekly scripture readings and prayers for every occasion imaginable. Beginning in October, we will gather after the 10:00 Mass to explore the other 970 pages in our prayer book. We will cover topics large, small and even trivial: *Where can I find prayers for sick people? If the Eucharist is the most often used part of the BCP, why is it in the middle instead of the front?* If you have your own prayer book bring it along. Don't worry if you don't own a prayer book. We have plenty of them around the church.

There are many more activities going on this fall. You will be able to find everything in the "Sunday Paper" included in the bulletin every Sunday.

Buildings and Grounds — PRIM

David Graham, PRIM Chair

The PRIM Committee has recently overseen the rebuilding of the chimney over the worship area. The chimney had been deteriorating for some time, dropping scale and bricks into the roof and gutter. The gutter on the north side of the worship area has been a persistent water leakage problem; patching has been a frustrating, short term fix. We have a contract for the recovering of the gutter and expect that this critical improvement will be accomplished by the press time of the newsletter. The cost of these two jobs is more than \$14,000 and has depleted the Preservation Fund. As St. Paul's expects to address a new roof in the next two years, a contribution to that fund will help maintain and preserve this remarkable building for generations.

On the Fence – About the Morning Glories On Our State Street Fence

John R. Pattison

Morning Glories are an invasive plant species and once started are all but impossible to get rid of. But our varieties which come up each year without help of any sort from our parish garden ministry, and tend to swallow up our handsome wrought iron fence as well, have their devoted following. These devotees are not just members of the parish, but also include many members of the community who frequently stroll up and down State and Third Streets and the Barker Park area.

There is some talk that this horticultural notion of morning-glories-on-the-fence began with me. I confess...

I can't remember exactly when, but somewhere within the last ten years, I planted a few seeds of this variety along the base of the fence in memory of the real originator, George Stavropolous, who lived in an apartment on Third Street across from Barker Park. Everyone in the neighborhood knew him as "Georgie Copolous". He was born on the island of Mykonos in Greece and came here as a teenager to work for John Paine, a parishioner of Saint Paul's. Mr. Paine lived at 49 Second Street in what is often referred to as The Castle. John Paine was very generous to his retainers, and they were equally loyal to him.

Though Georgie was Greek Orthodox, he also loved St. Paul's, and often took it upon himself to do gardening chores on the grounds. And the Morning Glories, as well as the rose bush on the corner of Third and State were among his handiworks.

When Georgie died the Morning Glories soon disappeared. Years went by and sometimes I would meet people on the street who remembered those spectacular blue blossoms on a late summer morning.

Well, seeing that Georgie's rose bush was still there, I thought maybe it was time to reintroduce the Morning Glories as a well-deserved tribute to an unsung friend of the parish.

Another confession... As of the very day of this writing I now realize that the genus *convolvulus* actually has an annual as well as a perennial variety. This explains the disappearance of the original variety when not replanted, and the tangled mess we have today.

Any volunteers for the Lay Weeders?

The Lay Weeders Guild

Louis Bannister, Weeder

The Lay Weeders at Saint Paul's gather periodically, weather permitting, for a time of fellowship and beautification and maintenance of the Parish Gardens. If you know about weeding it is a process that never ends...it can be done at any time, so please feel free to pop in and do a bit of it, even if only for 10 or 15 minutes.

We will gather on Saturday, 10 September at 10:00a to do a bit of maintenance gardening in preparation for the celebration of Mass on the Grass on 11 September. Both events are, of course, weather permitting.

Many thanks to Sharon Bonk, Joe Conlon, Michelle Doyle, John Pattison, Debbie Piccolo, Joe and Nick Piccolo, the clergy, and many others who have helped during the difficult rainy season to assist in helping to keep the Parish Garden an inviting, vibrant and peaceful outdoor space for ourselves and all who use it.

As Fall approaches it will be time to put things to rest for the Winter. For more information about our next scheduled gathering of the Lay Weeders, please speak with Louis Bannister (Parish Office, extension 5 or LBowerBannister@gmail.com). Remember, many hands make light work!

The Fall Fair and Rummage Sale

Louis Bannister, Coordinator

Come one! Come all! Saint Paul's Fall Fair will be held on Saturday, 24 September, beginning at 10:00a. The event, which is registered as a part of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area's annual Ramble Weekend, promises to be great fun! Featuring a Chicken Barbeque, a Rummage Sale, live music, tours of our building, and even a Dunk the Deacon/Soak the Sacristan Booth, proceeds from the event will benefit the Preservation Fund to continue to fund much needed repairs to the roof. A portion of the proceeds will benefit disaster relief efforts in our own area following Hurricane Irene.

Donations of rummage items are still being accepted through Sunday, 18 September. If you have signed up to donate food items for the Barbeque, they may be brought in on Sunday, 18 September during Coffee Hour or by arrangement during the week.

Volunteers are needed! As the date draws near, volunteers will be needed to assist in all manner of tasks ranging from setting up for the event, to grilling chicken, to hosting tours of the building, cashiering at the Rummage, and more. What a great way to show the greater community what a wonderful and friendly life there is at Saint Paul's!

Come and enjoy the event! Be part of this wonderful time! Bring your appetite, bring your bargain hunting skills, bring your loved ones, and most importantly—bring yourself!

For more information about the event, or to volunteer in any way, please speak with Louis Bannister (Parish Office, extension 5 or LBowerBannister@gmail.com). Thank you!

Bibles and Bratwurst

A Bible Study is being offered by Father Michael at Holmes and Watson's Pub at 450 Broadway in Troy. What a wonderful opportunity to enjoy food and fellowship in a relaxed and fun venue. Meetings will begin at 6:30p on Tuesdays 6 & 20 September, and 4 & 18 October. Please speak with Father Michael for more information.

The Blessing of the Animals

In celebration of the wonderful gift of our animal companions, we will offer a Blessing of the Animals at 10:00a on Saturday, 1 October in the Parish Garden. Last year's Blessing was well attended and it was a joy to see the Parish Garden abuzz with life such life! Please join us for this meaningful time of honoring all creatures great and small.

Please Remember...

It is important to remember those in need. Nonperishable foods, new underwear and socks, and toiletries are collected each Sunday and distributed to those in need. Baskets are located near the main entrances.

Save the Date!

Holy Eucharist will be celebrated on Wednesday, 7 December at 6:00p on the occasion of Father Michael's Tenth Anniversary of his Ordination. A dinner will follow in the Guild House. Details will appear in the next issue of the newsletter.

Music at Saint Paul's

Brian Hoffman, Organist & Choirmaster

As the choir prepares to begin another season at Saint Paul's, we look forward to some new facets to the program. The Adult Choir this year will feature some new singers, as well as some exciting new music never offered before at Saint Paul's. In addition, some new and unique music for duets, trios and quartets will be offered regularly in Sunday Worship, also expanding the repertoire for our musicians. Choir rehearsals begin on Thursday, 15 September at 7:00p.

The Saint Paul's School of Music and Arts will begin its 4th year and we are looking forward to recruiting several new children to the program. If you know of any children who love music and art, please let me know and I will be glad to make the contacts.

Anyone that would like to participate in the parish music program or assist with the School of Music and Arts may contact Brian through the Parish Office (extension 4).

Tuesdays at Noon Concert Series

Gene Tobey

Tuesdays at Noon is pleased to announce the completed artistic roster for 2011-2012, October through May, including both familiar performers and some new to the series.

18 October: Fresh from the deBlasiis Chamber Music series at the Hyde Collection in Glens Falls, Emil Altschuler, violin, and Jerome Mouffe, guitar will present an eclectic mix of classic and contemporary works.

15 November: In celebration of the Austin Organ's 90th birthday, Brian Hoffman and Donald Ingram will play music displaying the instrument's many singular and collective tonal attributes.

20 December: We will again witness the biennial performance of "A St. Paul's Sampler," music of the season with a cast TBA.

21 February: Jean Leonard will gift us with her beautiful soprano voice.

20 March: Pianist Megan Muthersbaugh, who first performed with Troy High's Gifted and Talented students in 2006, returns with selections from her Masters in Music recital.

16 April: Patti Melita, Peg Delaney and Linda Brown will celebrate National Jazz Appreciation Month with swing and sway.

21 May: We will close the season with a Dixieland band, the Ragtime Windjammers.

Note there is no January date, in recognition of the weather and our finances. As a long-established organization, we no longer apply for artistic grants from the Council on the Arts whose mission is enlarging the numbers of concert-goers.

Lay Led Lectionary Based Bible Study

A weekly Lay Led Bible Study based on the Sunday Lectionary Readings will begin on Sunday, 18 September at 9:00a in the Martha House Conference Room. Each session will last for 45 minutes. Coffee will be served. For more information, please speak to Louis Bannister (Parish Office, extension 5 or LBowerBannister@gmail.com).

Visiting Jane Gale

Florence Strang

It is a pleasure to pop in now and then to have a visit with Jane Gale who is living in Cohoes at the rehab center where she is relearning some of the necessary life skills. I'm sure Jane misses joining us for Sunday and Wednesday Eucharist and Bible Study, but the visits from Father Michael and her Saint Paul's friends help to keep her up to date.

Jane and I are both talkers, and conversation flows freely when we get together. After I rambled on awhile Jane picked up the conversation and related that others had been by to visit and that they had a great time together, which included a spur of the moment Hymn Sing. Jane is a "real" Episcopalian, and always enjoys a good hymn.

Before it was time for me to leave, Jane recited her schedule so that I could time my visits to her availability. I was really delighted, and actually not surprised, to hear that she is booked up from Monday to Friday afternoons with various therapy activities, book group, and working with her writer friend who is helping her record her life stories; I have enjoyed the ones she has shared with me.

I recommend a visit to Jane; it is a joy to share memories with her and to learn that she is as busy and on top of things as ever. As soon as my aching arm feels confident, I'll be on the road to Cohoes for a visit to Jane.

Saint Paul's Summer Film Festival

Gary G. Nelson

Proctors and the other Troy cinemas are long gone, but there is still a place where movies can be seen in Troy. And better yet, admission and snacks are free! Over the Summer months, Bob Kearney organized the fifth annual Summer Film Festival with biweekly showing of five films in the Guild House, attended by about two dozen enthusiastic fans. This year's theme was "suspense with a splash of humor" that might also be called "noir lite". The films were classics from around the 1950s, with favorite personalities like Jimmy Stewart, Marlene Dietrich and Ray Milland. Whether seen for the first time or the umpteenth, the new digital projector made each show a Tuesday night treat for all. The credits roll for Karen Strang who organized the Hall setup, John and Jane Pattison for the popcorn supply, and to all the extras who supplied goodies to eat. Bob is starting to get ideas for next year's festival, so plan for more evenings of entertainment and conviviality next summer.

The Fall Festival Potluck

Bob Kearney, Coordinator

Mark your calendars for the annual Fall Festival Potluck on Wednesday, 19 October. This year we will enjoy an old-fashioned (accompanied) hymn-sing following dinner. A song sheet will be distributed with a selection of familiar hymns such as *Abide With Me*, *Blest Be The Tie That Binds*, *In The Garden*, and other old favorites, interspersed with solos by featured singers. Evening Prayer at 6:00p, Dinner at 6:30p, Hymn-Sing at 7:15p. There will be a sign up sheet at the rear of the Church in early October.

The Play Readers Group

Bob Kearney, Coordinator

Saint Paul's Play Readers will meet in the Guild House on the first and third Monday of the month this year, beginning on Monday, 19 September, at 6:00p. All are invited to attend this most fun and creative group. Please speak with Bob Kearney for more information.

LIFE & WORSHIP
AT SAINT PAUL'S

Sundays

8:00am Holy Eucharist (*Rite II, Spoken*)
9:00am Lectionary Based Bible Study
10:00am Holy Eucharist (*Rite II, Choral*)
11:15am Coffee Hour and Adult Education

Mondays

6:00pm Play Readers Group (*First and Third Mondays*)

Tuesdays

8:15am Morning Prayer
6:30pm Bible and Bratwurst at Holmes & Watson (*As Scheduled*)

Wednesdays

12:05pm Holy Eucharist (*Rite II, Spoken*)
1:00pm Bible Study

Thursdays

4:30pm African Dance Class (*Guild House*)
7:00pm Choir Rehearsal

Fridays

8:15am Morning Prayer
6:00pm Troy Night Out (*Last Fridays*)

Saturday, 24 September

10:00am—4:00pm *The Fall Fair: Rummage Sale and Chicken Barbeque*

Saturday, 1 October

10:00am *The Blessing of the Animals*

SAINT PAUL'S CHURCH – A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL PEOPLE.

SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
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