



St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Dear Beloved in Christ,

On August 6th, one of the things this parish did at the special meeting, was to look at how we might respond to recent developments in the Episcopal Church, as a result of actions taken at General Convention. Below I have reproduced some of the comments I made at the beginning of that meeting. I do this for those who could not be at this meeting, but very much want to know what was shared. Here are some of those thoughts:

I am certain that many of you have been wondering what was coming at this meeting. Some thought that I would announce my resignation. While it may be disappointing to some, that will not happen today. Others are certain that I would announce our walking papers -- that we were leaving the Episcopal Church. I do not intend that we do that today either. So, why are we here? For basically two reasons. First, I want to share some thoughts about what I think should be done in response to recent developments in the Episcopal Church and to allow you an opportunity to speak, as well; and secondly, to ask Steve Hamill to address some financial concerns that we need to address before year end. So having said that let me begin by sharing my thoughts as to how I would like to see us as a congregation respond to the events of General Convention.

Well, General Convention has occurred and there are many who are dismayed by what has happened (I am one of them). Some of you may not even have an inkling of what happened. I could give you some information about what happened, but the truth is that much of that information is probably bias and even a

little self-serving. Instead let me share some thoughts that I think my help to lead us forward.

There is a significant crisis in the Episcopal Church. There is a very real chance that the Episcopal Church will shatter, that is even more likely now, as a result of the actions of General Convention. Some may think that what lies behind this is a dispute over homosexuality by different members of the church, but rest assured it is not that. The dispute is more foundational than that. It is more about the authority of scripture and the uniqueness of Jesus Christ than it is about sexual orientation or practice.

I am not pleased by what happened in Columbus, but I do not wish to spend even one moment worrying about what has happened. It is done. Instead, I want to spend all of my efforts continuing the work that Jesus Christ has called me to do here at St Paul's. I am prepared to do what God calls me to do. I have tried to position this congregation in a place that will honor God and honor his mission. Furthermore, I do not wish to have my ministry characterized by what I am against, but rather by what I am for -- and I am for the Lordship of Jesus Christ and I stand and shall always stand by his word revealed in Scripture. There is so much work to do here, good news to be preached to the poor, hearts of the brokenhearted to be bound to Jesus, freedom to be declared to the captive, and release to the prisoners in darkness and I will not abandon it or be distracted from it. Please, I ask of you, patience and commitment to hang together until this gets sorted out for us by the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us not be anxious about tomorrow, for Jesus is Lord all the time.

Furthermore, I do not wish to stand in judgment of my brothers and sisters in this church. I know that their witness sometimes diminishes my own, but I do not wish to pound on them or judge them for I am convinced that my brothers and sisters, even if they are terribly wrong, are not the real problem -- our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers

of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil. For there is a spiritual enemy and he is the one who seeks to destroy my brothers and sisters. And it is that battle, the spiritual one that I would choose to engage and not in attacks on others.

And because I wish to remain within the Anglican Communion, for now I must be patient and wait to see what the Primates of the Anglican Communion do, and then follow their leading. I encourage you to endure this waiting with me for I love each one of you and desire to be in fellowship with you all.

This does not mean, however, that we should be idle. I will take my lead from Scripture. Let me read to you from the book of Joel. The people of Judah faced a terrible day and this is what God said to the people -- is he also not speaking to us? Joel 1:13-14. "Put on sackcloth, O priests, and mourn. Wail you who minister before the altar. Come, spend the night in sackcloth, you who minister before my God. Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly, summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the Lord your God and cry out to the Lord."

That is where I would like to begin. I am declaring a fast for the church. I am asking that those who wish to join me in this that we all fast on the first Tuesday of the month -- I intend to fast every Friday as well -- my time for sackcloth. But I am asking each of you who have a desire to cry out to the Lord in this time that you join me on the first Tuesday of the month for a time of fasting. I am also declaring a solemn assembly. That on the evening of the first Tuesday of the month we gather together as a people here at St Paul's and pray for the church. That time of prayer will be at 7:00 pm. The first such day of fasting and prayer will be September 5, 2006 - the day after Labor Day. If we really intend to make a difference in this spiritual battle, we need to begin with fasting and prayer.

I have a few other suggestions, as well. These are positive things that can be done -- this is not whining. First, write letters to the

Bishop expressing your heart. Do not be angry or threatening with your letters, but reveal your heart, your wounds concerning the developments within the church. In your writing, remember that the Bishop is not the enemy, he is your father in God. Encourage him, by speaking the truth in love to him. He needs to understand how you feel and he needs to know that you support him and his ministry as he stands for truth -- the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Letters should also be written to the Executive Council of the Diocese -- these could be copied letters that you have also sent to the Bishop. The Executive Council needs to know how the people of this Diocese feel about the state of the church. Letters should also be written to national figures -- other bishops perhaps, certainly the presiding bishop elect. When writing to her, do not attack her, but rather point out things that she has said that trouble your heart and cause you anguish and hurt. The Executive Council of the Episcopal Church could receive copies of those letters as well, so that they might know how you feel about the condition of the church. Letters can be a positive way to affect change. I do not promise success, however, but I know that one letter is better than a thousand complaints that no one except those who agree with you hear.

We have already mentioned prayer, but don't forget to pray privately about this as well. God can change hearts. He changed mine once and yours too, so trust in His grace to bring about change.

Another thing is to write resolutions for the next Diocesan Convention. The Convention will occur in November and so it is time to write those resolutions now. Write resolutions on important faith issues; e.g. The uniqueness of Jesus, the Trinity, the authority of Scripture. When you have completed these resolution have Father Derek or me look at them for accuracy. It may seem that resolutions of this sort ought not to be needed in the Church, but at such a time as this they are critical. We need to assert clearly what we believe about Jesus, about Scripture, about the nature of God, etc. And doesn't it matter a great deal that we know how our brothers and sisters in

this Diocese also feel about these things?

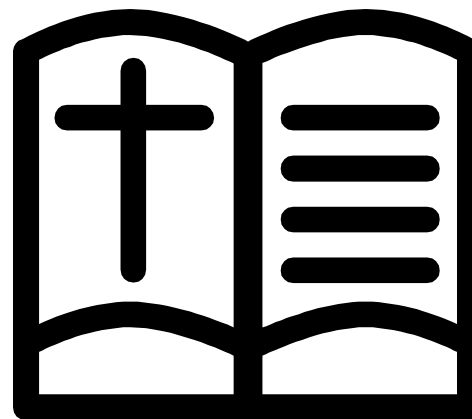
It is important that no resolution be used to single out specific people or groups for condemnation. That would not be helpful and would not be positive. Resolutions can also be written seeking to provide some guidance for the Diocese. I suspect that these would not be as favorably received, but that doesn't mean that it isn't worth the effort.

If you want to be part of the fasting and solemn assembly, just fast on September 5, and come to the prayer service at 7:00 pm that night. If you can't be here, please pray for the church wherever you are, and consider fasting for the church as well.

At that point I opened it up to comments from the floor and there were several very thoughtful heartfelt responses. If you have any thoughts that you would like to share with me please call me or come to see me. This may seem like difficult times, but as the author of Hebrews reminds us, we have not yet had to bear witness with our blood, so be of good courage and trust that all things will indeed work together for good, as we trust in the Lord Jesus and seek to discern his purpose in all of this for us.

Love in Christ Jesus,

John+



Fasting

In early times fasting meant the entire abstention from food for the whole or part of the fast day. In the Eastern Church it is still observed in that way. In the West, however, it has been modified somewhat to allow for at least one meal on the fast day and for certain people (the very young, the elderly, diabetics, etc.) all meals, but with a reduction in the quantity of food and an abstention from red meats and poultry.

The purpose of fasting is to strengthen the spiritual life by focusing on prayer rather than eating. If during the time of fasting the body responds with a feeling of hunger that becomes the incentive to enter into prayer for the concern for which one is fasting. In the call for fasting that I have asked us to consider, it would be an opportunity then to pray for the church.



Secretary Position is Filled

As many of you know on July 31, 2006 Vicky Stauber-Pufall resigned as secretary of St Paul's. Vicky had been secretary for over seven years. The Vestry temporarily hired Kathleen Lee to cover the summer months. The Vestry made a decision at the last Vestry meeting not to hire members of the congregation for the secretarial position. They did so for basically three reasons. First, it is very difficult for the person hired if they are a member of the congregation to not always be seen as "on the job". This may affect their ability to enter fully into the life of the congregation. Secondly, it is hard for the clergy to be both pastor and boss of the person hired. And finally, there were multiple members of the congregation who were interested in the position, and how was the Vestry to decide whom it should hire without hurting the feelings of the others? So, on August 15, 2006 the decision was made to hire Janine Wildes. Janine is a member of First Baptist Church. She is very friendly and I encourage everyone to welcome her when you have the opportunity.

NOTED:

Are you free Wednesday afternoons from 2 to 3? Do you want to bathe in the scripture, have some prayer buddies, and pretty much learn, love and laugh - well, do I have a deal for you!

Women's Bible Study begins again!
Wednesday, September 13th at 2 PM.

Call me if you have any questions -
we are praying on you!
Helene Jensen 386-6004

Rev. Kirby will be at St. Paul's on
September 23rd for Eucharistic Minister
and Worship Minister training. Sign up
sheets and more details
coming soon.

Newsletter deadline is the 2nd Sunday
of each month. Please put info. in
Tori Marben's mailbox or e-mail her at
vbkmarden2@juno.com

Get on the Servant Schedule!

Fr. John will be holding a training and
information meeting on September 10th
(between services) for those interested in
serving as usher, greeter, lector or
prayer before worship.

Please come!!!



BELOVED: Women in God's Image

The women's day that was held at St. Paul's will be offered a second time at Grace Church, Menomonie. Dates are still to be determined, but it will be sometime this fall. If you missed the day held at St. Paul's, or you want to come for a second time, please do. We are also preparing another women's day to be offered to the women of St. Paul's some time in the spring. Information regarding the formation of Bible/book study groups will be presented within the next couple of weeks.

HUDSON DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Games are now being held at the Hudson Area Senior Center, 1320
Wisconsin Street. Next scheduled game is Monday, September 11, at 7:00
P.M. Please call Elisabeth Nelson for reservations, or questions:
381-0011. All bridge players are welcome.

The Women of Faith Conference Contagious Joy 2006

October 20-21, 2006: St. Paul, MN

If you are interested in attending this uplifting, affirming and fun conference for women, please contact the church office as soon as possible @ (715) 386-2348. We have reserved 25 tickets for this event!! The ticket price is \$65.00. A box lunch is available to purchase for an additional \$8.00.

September Birthdays:

- 1 Diane Reese
- 3 Kristin Granberg
- 4 Kenny Hardman
- 7 Mary Wood
- 8 Dale DeCraene
- 9 Charlotte Mensen
Caroline Mensen
Pete Peterson
Joseph Place
- 10 Rex Cunningham
- 12 Sue Obermueller
Emily Ryder
- 13 Jane Conover Kelliher
- 14 Stephanie Perry
- 16 Jeff Rupert
- 17 Elizabeth Hamill
James Rupert
Dyllan Johnson
- 20 Alexander Hale
Tyler Rusch

21 Bob McGrew

- 23 Ed Slamkowski
Sydney Mueller
- 28 Kate Mensen
Jon Place
- 29 Heather Tank
- 30 Jacob Solie
Garret Wood

September Anniversaries:

- 3 Jim/Sue Obermueller
Chris/Heather Tank
- 11 Keith/Rebecca Trotter
- 12 Dave/Melissa Hardman
Paul/Christine McGinnis
- 28 David/Kim Ball
- 29 Cal/Mary Wood

If your special day is not listed—Please

Want a weekend away in a relaxed setting? to spend time reviewing/renewing your life with and commitment to Christ:

Eau Claire Cursillo #26

will be held October 12 – 15, 2006
at Bundy Hall, Menomonie, WI.

Interested in attending?

Please call the church office for sign up or contact information.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

September 2006

Non Profit Org.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Hudson, Wisconsin
54016

We're on the Web!
Stpaulshudson.faithweb.com

Jesus is Lord, All the time!

St. Paul's Episcopal Church:

502 County Road UU, Hudson, WI 54016-7583
Office: 715-386-2348 Fax: 715-386-2542
E-mail = spechudsonwi@juno.com

Services:

Sun. 8:00 am Holy Eucharist Traditional Service
9:15 am Adult Bible Study/Sunday School
Children's Sunday School (Sep-May)
Youth Confirmation Class (Sep-Apr)
10:30 am Holy Eucharist Praise Service

Wed. 2:00 pm Women's Bible Study (Sep-Apr)
3:00 pm NETworks Youth Ministry Middle High
6:00 pm NETworks Youth Ministry Senior High

Thur. 9:00 am Hudson Mom's Group Meeting
11:00 am Holy Eucharist/Bag Lunch/Bible Study

Jesus is Lord...All The Time!

Clergy:

The Rt. Rev. Keith B. Whitmore, Bishop
The Rev. John E. Rasmus, Rector
The Rev. Richard McGinnis, Associate
The Rev. Derek Washington, Associate

NETworks Youth Director: Ben Woods
Episcopal Church Women: Patti Muenich 715-386-8532
Band of Brothers: Fr. Derek Washington 715-386-2348
Men's Social Ministry: Ed Slamkowski 715-246-9989
Sunday School: Amy Dickerson
Operation H.E.L.P. Volunteer Phone Line 715-386-0881
*Small Group Bible Study: Sunday and Wednesday evenings
*Alpha Course Host: Inquirer's Class: is offered in the fall and early spring. Call the church office for dates, times and locations