



St. Paul's Episcopal Church

January 2025

SUNDAY SERVICES

SUNDAY - 10:00 A.M.

JANUARY 5
MORNING PRAYER
Lay Reader - Sam French

JANUARY 12
HOLY EUCHARIST
The Rev. Mike Kyle
Lay Reader - Kate French

JANUARY 19
MORNING PRAYER
Lay Reader - Don Kiefer

JANUARY 26
HOLY EUCHARIST
The Rev. Mike Kyle
Lay Reader - Ruana Gladfelter

A Message from the Bishop's Warden



I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas filled with the glory of the Christmas Eve service, as once again we welcomed and celebrated the birth of the Christ Child into the world. (And wished our own Alara a very happy Christmas birthday!) I hope we all had a peaceful, loved-filled celebration of this new year that is upon us, as well. We pray for God's blessings and direction as we go into 2025. May we find our own ways to be the hands and feet of Christ in this world. And may we always remember that God is always with us, we are assured we are never abandoned, and with God at our side, we can face anything.

I am going to share a lovely "The Shepherd Calls" column by Dr. H. Wade Paris. We have just heard the stories of the angels appearing to the shepherds and soon we will be hearing the stories of Jesus's miracles. Often we are asked to put ourselves into the scripture stories. What would we see or hear or feel? This little story did just that for me.

"A Simple Shepherd"

By Dr. H. Wade Paris

John's gospel reports not everything Jesus did was recorded (John 21:25). I like to image events that could have happened. This is one of those imaginative events. Joel was a shepherd. He had been a shepherd all his life. A shepherd's life is not easy. Joel's life had been especially hard. He was a bit simple; there were many things he could not understand. He never married; and since his parent's death, he had lived alone and lonely.

CHURCH INFORMATION

Mailing Address: P. O. Box 453 Clinton, MO 64735

GPS Address: 1837 E Hwy 7 Clinton, MO 64735

Bishop Provisional, The Rt. Rev. Diane M. Jardine Bruce, Diocese of West Missouri

Bishop's Warden: Kate French, kfrench357@gmail.com

St. Paul's Email: st.pauls.clinton@gmail.com

As Joel aged, shepherding grew difficult. He never owned sheep. Instead, he worked as a hireling. The day came when owners feared his age and health would put their sheep at risk.

As a believer, he often prayed for the Messiah to come quickly. On his final night in the field sleeping on the hard ground and being very anxious about his future, he awoke to a bright light filling the sky. It frightened him, but then he heard singing. Beautiful music – angels were everywhere. They were saying something, “A Savior is born. He is in a barn in Bethlehem. Hurry and you can see him.”

Thus, Joel experienced the greatest event in his long, hard life. He observed the baby looked hale and healthy like a newborn lamb. What impressed him most that night was the angels – their brilliance, their marvelous music. He could not get that out of his mind.

He was hired as a household servant; however, he was slow and clumsy. After being dismissed from several families, he was sold as a slave to pay his debts. Joel feared the worst. His owner was a Roman soldier, a centurion. The master had purchased him not so much for his labor but because he reminded him of his late father.

Surprisingly, the two men developed a camaraderie. Once Joel was ill; everyone assumed the old man would die. His centurion master rode miles to fetch Jesus, hoping He would come and heal Joel. Learning of his master’s mission, Joel hoped he would live long enough to see Jesus. Instead, he miraculously got well before the master returned. In response to the centurion’s faith, Jesus had healed Joel from afar.

Later, Joel stood in the back of the crowd when Jesus was crucified. He believed God would send angels to rescue Jesus. When they did not come, Joel was crushed, another disappointment. That night he asked God why the angels did not come; “He was your son?”

Then he heard it again -- the beautiful music.

The brilliance of that holy night filled his room, but nowhere else in the house. Then an angel whispered, “Take my hand, Joel, and I’ll take you home.” The angels had come just for him.

This sweet journey in the imagination has stayed with me since I read it and it brought tears to my eyes as I typed it just now. May we live lives of faith like Joel, and may we always trust we will one day be with our heavenly Father.

In Christ’s peace,
Kate

CHURCH NEWS

Bishop Diane’s Retirement Receptions: Mark your calendars!

Bishop Diane will be with us Sunday March 16th at 10:00 am for her visitation and Alyssa’s confirmation. Then from 3:00 – 6:00 pm St. Paul’s will be the site for a Eucharist & Reception for the Central Deanery. (Each deanery will host a reception.)



The diocese will handle everything and we just need to provide drinks.

What a wonderful chance for many of us around our deanery to come together and thank this wonderful bishop for all she has done for our diocese. She has brought healing in many areas, and I think we will go into our time with Bishop Amy ready to hit the ground working to spread the love of Christ.

Don’t worry, Alyssa, we will all be helping with the cleaning for this big event!

Property Grant:

At the Diocesan council meeting on December 14, the Council approved our grant request and we have received the check! Philip Lofflin, a member of the Property Committee and Senior Warden of St. Mary’s, has experience in outdoor lighting and security systems, and has offered his help in anyway as we move forward with our plans.

Christmas Outreach:

St. Paul's voted to again support our Clinton recycling workers through Henry County Industries, which provides employment for physically and developmentally challenged adults. We will

provide gift bags of goodies contributed by members and a \$20.00 gift card from funds earmarked for outreach for each worker. The



congregation met after church to fill the bags and prepare them for holiday distribution. When Sam and Kate delivered the bags, they were able to visit with the shelter workers who make recycling possible. We



were told that the Center is up and running again.

Outside donations are 24/7 and include cardboard, tin, and aluminum.

Inside donations may be dropped off between 7:30 am to 1:30 pm and include plastic #1 and 2, all paper and newspapers, and books and magazines (which I didn't know!).

All plastics and cans need to be washed as they don't have this capacity and will need to throw them away if they are not clean.

This group doesn't receive much recognition for the hard work they do for our community. Our thanks for all they do!!

Annual Meeting:

I just wanted to remind everyone that this will be coming up in February. If anyone would like to step forward in any way, or if anyone cannot continue with what you are doing, please let me know. Our big thanks go to Diane Dungey, who is working diligently to get us seen on Facebook, Kirsten Hockaday, who is keeping our web page updated, and Alyssa Gladfelter for all she does keeping the church clean.

Congregational Vitality Assessment:

The Diocesan Council will be working with Faith X to conduct a Congregational Vitality Assessment survey of all churches. It is looking at where

we all feel we are strong and where we could benefit from diocesan support. It is only designed to be positive and a tool for awareness, not to identify congregations that are small and struggling. Many of the churches in our diocese are small but mighty. We are all doing God's work where we are planted.

Please look over the areas the survey will cover. We will rate ourselves on a scale of 1-4 in 1) vision, mission, and discernment; 2) lay engagement and empowerment; 3) context awareness and inclusion; 4) change readiness; 5) dealing with differences and conflict; 6) worship; 7) spiritual life; 8) formation, education, and training; 9) outreach; 10) leadership and organization; 11) stewardship. Be thinking 😊. We will begin this after the new year

Due to technical difficulties - probably of the editor, please open Part 2 for two more pages and a great soup recipe!

.....open Part 2