



September 15, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

What a challenging year it has been! I had high hopes for 2020. Just the sound of it, 2020, brought to mind “clear vision”; a time when things would come together into sharp focus. As we all know, that’s not what happened. The COVID-19 pandemic threw us all into a time of uncertainty and the murder of George Floyd set in motion civic protests across the country and renewed calls for justice. Our church has stood empty six long months. Out of love, care and concern for ourselves and our neighbors, we’ve been keeping social distance, observing stay-at-home orders and washing our hands thoroughly and frequently. Unfortunately, 2020 will be remembered for things like its toilet paper shortage, Zoom meetings, outdoor emergency room triage centers, kids stuck at home, parents struggling to juggle so much and the unbelievable number deaths from this terrible disease. We pray that systemic changes will finally draw us closer to God’s dream of a just society, and we pray for all who have lost their jobs, all who have lost friends and family and all who have lost their lives.

**In the midst of all this, I write to you today to introduce this year’s Annual Giving Campaign and ask for your pledge to support St. Paul’s through 2021.** First, I need to offer my sincere appreciation to every one of you who has continued to support the church through donations, pledge payments, encouragement and prayer. Your support has made all the difference and we are so very grateful!

Now we need to set our sights on preparing for the coming year. In order for the important mission and ministry of St. Paul’s to continue into its 132<sup>nd</sup> year, we’ll need your support. Budgets need to be prepared; plans need to be made. But what will we have to work with? You can help answer that question.

This year’s theme is: **What LOVE Looks Like.** For so long, we invited people to join us in church, to fill the pews so we could praise and worship the Lord together. But for the last many months, the church has stood empty. For now, an empty church is What LOVE Looks Like. We sacrifice for safety out of concern for ourselves and our neighbors. God’s blessings have surrounded us throughout this time. I’m sure you can come up with many lovely stories about What LOVE Looks Like in your life today – a growing garden, food on the table, Zoom meetings with grandchildren, the opportunity to work from home, tele-med appointments, and other such things. Do you know what another great example of What LOVE Looks Like would be? It would be your pledge of financial support to St. Paul’s throughout the coming year.

Though the church building is empty, the work of the church carries on. Online services continue. Small groups and Bible Studies offer support and opportunity to learn and grow in the knowledge and love of God even as we are separate one from another. We continue feeding people, supporting people, praying for people and doing the work we are called to do in the name of Christ.

**ST. PAUL’S**  
**EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
✠

The Rev. Susan Bek  
*Rector*

The Rev. Liz Williams  
*Associate Rector*

The Rev. Dr. Richard Swanson  
*Retired Associate*

Bonnie Rubrecht  
*Parish Administrator*

Drew Darby  
*Treasurer*

2020 VESTRY

Rose Hayden-Smith  
*Senior Warden*

Woody Bretz  
*Junior Warden*

Peter Anderson

Ted Andrews

Dan Campbell

Kathleen Crookston

Drew Darby

Steve Jones

Laura Kemp

Sarah Lamola

Marcia Semple

Dan Wakelee



**WHAT LOVE LOOKS LIKE**

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There have been some cost savings since the church has been closed so long, but there have been lots of new expenses as well. So far, we've been able to keep and pay all our employees, but, since some of our tenants can no longer pay their rent, we worry about how we'll be able to hold on.

Our Annual Giving Campaign will begin on Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup>. We invite you to join us for our online worship service that Sunday. Immediately following the service, in place of Virtual Coffee Hour, our Finance Committee will offer a presentation about our current finances and goals for 2021. We invite you to join us on Zoom for that meeting. We will record that session so that, if you miss it, you can go back and see it later.

Your pledge packet will be mailed to you and sent via email. If you already know what you'd like to pledge, please write it on your pledge card right away and send, email or call it in. If you need some time to think and pray about it, that's no problem. The campaign will run through Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup>.

Things will get better. Jesus offers hope to a hurting world and stands with us in times of trial. An empty church is What LOVE Looks Like today. Your pledge is an offering of hope and believing that things will get better and that St. Paul's will continue its important work throughout this pandemic and beyond.

Thank you so much for your pledge of whatever amount works for you. We look forward to doing great things in the name of Christ with whatever you are able to give.

With **LOVE** in Christ,

The Rev. Susan Bek,  
Rector

