

A Special Thanks – Gumbo for God, Jambalaya for Jesus, Pancakes for All!

Thanks so much everyone!!! It looked absolutely beautiful, thanks to Beth's endless stash of lovely things and her kindness in sharing it!

Thanks to all the set up angels who moved tables, chairs and then set the tables. It presented a wonderful welcome to so many hungry diners! Lisa, Sally, Beth, Jim, Marty, Julie, Mark, Cooper. So many do-ers! I hope I did not leave anyone out.

The cooking so many did-awesome Jambalaya, Gumbo (even last minute replacement Gumbos-I'm looking at you Darryl/Charlie. Brownies and Corn bread-which almost did not make it out of the kitchen--we all had to "test it". Ditto the brownies! Alexis's ham. Yum!

Thanks to Mel for manning the door and being the welcoming face of St. Paul's.

So many people did double duty-kitchen, serving, clean up, putting away the tables and chairs. Fran and Marty and Joann and Cha taking orders and "Selling" seconds when we had leftover food!

All the kitchen crew and all the servers and all the washers-OMG so many dishes! Marty and Jim and Bev scrubbed away along with others who would dive in if anyone stepped away from the sink for just a second!. Thank you so very much.

Every time we do something like this I am always reminded of the dedication and willingness of y'all to just dive in, get it done, and get it done beautifully.

And Thank you Charlie for taking the lead and letting us all know what needed to be done and keeping track of it all.

I'm so happy to be in your club!

Sue Monroe

Angels! Angels! Angels!

What can I say...thank you to all for setting up a beautiful and welcoming dining experience, providing the food and supplies, and serving up the St. Paul's experience to all!

Great job, as always!

Charlie aka Darryl





PRIEST IN CHARGE - REPORT on 2016

When I arrived in the Fall of 2015, I named a goal for our life together. It was "healing our world through prayer and action."

Over the past year, a lot has happened in relation to that goal.

Your Wardens and Vestry did meet for a Spring Retreat and as a result, they developed two goals. One to become more visible to the larger Ossining community and a second, to engage with people who come to St Paul's seeking a spiritual home.

Thanks to the good work of a number of your leaders, both these goals have been considerably advanced.

Lisa Rosenbloom has done a stunning professional job of restoring our website to its former glory and of enlivening our Facebook page. As a result, we are certainly catching the attention of our neighbors (in a good way.)

Carolyn and Art continue to be the loving face of St Paul's running the Youth Music programs over three seasons of the year. Their ministry in that area touches the lives of more than thirty students and their families.

And this year the ongoing efforts of the Lantern Shop staff and their Christmas Wreath partners brought more people than last year to the doors of St Paul's.

The subcommittee of the vestry called the engagement committee has been very active. During the Summer this group (headed by Jo Ann McGrath) ran a focus group to learn about what young family mothers were seeking in a spiritual home. As a result of their careful listening, the vestry has instituted our new monthly "come as you are" service at 5PM on the third Sunday of each month. We hope that this new service added to our lively Sunday School and PNO programs for school children will make St Paul's an even more welcoming place for families.

Another area of growth this year came in the area of justice ministry. You know, we used to call this work "outreach" because it was a ministry of reaching out to help others. Today we call it justice work...not because the work has changed but because we see the work differently. In the past our efforts to help others might have been seen as charity but now we recognize that when we do for others we are only restoring the balance between people which God always intended us to have. That being said, your vestry voted this year to host the BOMA travelling shelter which serves homeless folk from Ossining and this past week we housed 9 men and 1 woman who otherwise would have been out in the cold. Make no mistake, this is not easy work. It takes organization, energy, and patience. Just as when you have guests in your home, the normal balance of day to day operation is disrupted. But our work in this area is a response to direct Gospel mandates and it has been important. Like the produce of the Mustard Seed Garden our shelter effort restores the spirits of those who give and those who receive.

Which brings me to the area of buildings and grounds. None of what I have described would have happened without our lovingly tended St Paul's campus. Roger Rowe has for years ably shouldered the work of keeping this large plant afloat. This year, he not only manages the buildings and grounds but has taken on the further task of chairing a building and grounds committee. His helpers are a uniquely qualified group of home owners and also professionals who understand property needs and challenges and under Roger's leadership they have worked well together.

So, I would say that in this past year, St. Paul's has been an effective nexus of healing action. But what about the year to come? Well, remember my opening goal "healing our world through prayer and action?" I believe it is time to focus our efforts directly on prayer and Scripture. In Lent we will be studying the Holy Week readings using both Theological reflection and Lectio Divina techniques. And once the Renewal Works team does its work, I expect we will have more clear avenues of spiritual development to explore.

I am grateful to all of you for a wonderful year and now, I have some very particular thanks to express...

Faithfully,

Cooper

Warden's Report
February, 2017
Mark Monroe

This past year, 2016, had a lot of highlights for me at St. Paul's. But one that keeps rising to the top is hearing little Freya call out "Yay!" at the end of a hymn.

It's a joyful moment all on its own, but beyond that it's linked to having eight kids from five families around the Sunday School table – up from four kids, two families for the last few years. Yay! We have welcomed some new people to St. Paul's this year, and I hope we'll be welcoming more in the year to come. Here are some other highlights and issues that are on my mind:

Visibility and Engagement

Two of the Vestry's top priorities in 2016 were for St. Paul's to be more visible in our community, and more welcoming and engaging to newcomers who find their way here. Lisa Rosenbloom has made immense contributions to the first goal, visibility. She was already overseeing a vibrant Facebook site for us, but last year took on the task of resurrecting our website as well. She worked her way through one complication after another, found good sources of expertise to help her, and has now produced a colorful, informative, professional-looking website that we can all be proud of: stpaulsonthehill.org. Looking for Julie's homily from January Morning Prayer? Want to check the calendar for an upcoming event? Take a look if you haven't been there lately. Thank you Lisa!

JoAnn McGrath led a vestry committee that worked on the second goal, engaging new members. The most prominent outgrowth of this is our new "Come As You Are" Family Service at 5 PM on the third Sunday of each month. The first of these, in January, was short, simple, friendly, peaceful, beautiful and powerful for the 12 of us who participated. I hope more of us will give this service a try in the coming months. It's tailored to – but **not limited** to – families with young children.

The idea for this new service came out of an in-depth discussion that JoAnn set up in August with four women in their 30s and 40s, who openly shared their thoughts and beliefs about spirituality and church. Guess what? They're a lot like us older folks in some ways, and not so much in other ways. For St. Paul's to thrive and grow in the future, we will need to be sensitive and responsive to newcomers. Growth always means change. I hope everyone here will do all that we can to spread the word about St. Paul's, invite new people in, and welcome those who come.

Four budget categories – payroll, buildings & grounds, utilities and diocesan assessment – make up 88% of our budgeted expenses.

I believe we have to think long-term. If it's a matter of spending \$100 now or \$500 in a couple of years, well, a stitch in time saves nine, as the saying goes. I also believe that **membership** will be the only realistic long-term solution to balancing our budget. We can't neglect needed maintenance. We can't have the place looking run-down and uncared for. We need the spiritual leadership, the music, the visibility and the organization/administration that our salaried people provide. When somebody comes to St. Paul's for the first time, it has to be a safe, welcoming and well-kept place.

Spiritual Leadership

As warden, I've now had the chance to work closely with Cooper for over a year. It is a pleasure! She's a strong leader, but also an open-minded leader who listens and considers other viewpoints. Her vision is not all about her – she's here to serve St. Paul's, Trinity and the community. She brings wonderful energy, commitment and focus to her position. She is spiritually minded but very much rooted in reality as well. Her sermons are excellent.

Of course, we share Cooper with Trinity so she's at St. Paul's every other Sunday. I enjoy this arrangement too. Once a month we have a supply priest and once a month we have lay leaders for Morning Prayer, and these give us a variety of voices and points of view. I like going to Trinity for a joint service once in a while – it's a different worship style and environment. Between Cooper, supply priests, Morning Prayer, 5 PM, and Trinity, our services now offer a lot of different ways to seek out and connect with God.

St. Paul's has committed to participating in the "Renewal Works" project – I hope you've completed the online survey! – and we're hopeful that this will help us further adapt our approach to the congregation's desires and spiritual needs.

Outreach

Outreach is another expression of spirituality, and we are doing more in this area as well. This week, St. Paul's is hosting the Ossining Emergency Homeless Shelter for the first time (although we have helped support it at Trinity in the past). When Bishop Dietsche was here in January, we showed him what the Sunday School kids were doing for the shelter and I said, "We welcome bishops here, but we are also welcoming the homeless." His reply? "If you're not welcoming the homeless, there wouldn't be much point in welcoming bishops."

For those who don't know, Cooper has been the driving force behind expanding the shelter from three weeks at Trinity last year, to more than three months at several different locations this year, with much broader support from local congregations.

(more)

The shelter joins other outreach programs, including R.E.P.A.I.R., the Mustard Seed Garden, and especially the big after-school and summer music programs that bring dozens of local kids to St. Paul's. Many thanks to Carolyn, Art, and all the others who bring needed services to the community through St. Paul's.

Concerns

Now a couple of concerns. First, I already mentioned the budget deficit. Like any organization, we ultimately need to balance our budget one way or another. We need to be as prudent and efficient as possible in our spending, but without making cuts that hurt us long-term. We should all look at our pledges and other stewardship support and consider whether we're doing everything that we can. Our fund-raising events have been doing very well, but they can't fill the whole gap.

Mostly, again, I believe that building our membership is what will enable us to thrive. It's no secret that church attendance in our country has been declining for years. But as we've seen, there are still people who want the spiritual nourishment, community, education and tradition that churches can provide. Let's make sure they know what's special about St. Paul's on the Hill!

Our other major concern is lay leadership. It has become harder to recruit people for Vestry and especially for Warden positions. With Art stepping down for health reasons, we now have no wardens for 2017. We've spoken to several people and understand their reasons for declining, but obviously this is a big problem. As far as I know, it's unprecedented for St. Paul's. I hope we can discuss it at this year's annual meeting.

Thank you!

Finally, while I've mentioned a few people who've played major roles in 2016, it would require page after page to thank everyone who deserves it, for contributions both large and small. St. Paul's is a special place because of what we make it, all of us. Thank you for everything you do, and let's have a great 2017.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

3-01 Alexander Pollack
3-04 Sara Brewster
3-11 Salvatore James Triano
3-13 Robert Brocchi
3-15 Margaret Morse
3-17 Sean Docker
3-21 John Joseph Dias, IV
3-22 Brenda Dias
3-30 David Kamp
3-30 Max Gulian

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

3-28 Lisa & Robert Rosenbloom

MARCH BAPTISMS

3-18 Robert Docker
3-27 Madison Madera
Jaden Prince
Christopher Schuler
(Joan & George Holsten's grandchildren)

MARCH DEATHS

3-15 Mary Hamshire
3-17 Ralph McGibbon
3-22 Shirley Decker
Matt McLeod
Iva Barnes
3-30 Jean Budnick