



St. Paul's Journal

Ephiphanytide 2021



Dear friends:

I am delighted to introduce this issue of *St. Paul's Journal* with thanks, as always, to Gail—still our multi-competent, energetic, and ever-kind office manager—and to this issue's five lay people who have done the rest of the parish the favour of putting their thoughts into thoughtful words for the rest of us: so thanks go, in the order Gail placed their pieces, to Nancy Blair, Gordon Flowerdew, Margaret Bateman Ellison, Katherine Lee, and Martin Gibling.

Nancy has a passion for connecting the faith of the Church to the rest of God's creation, to challenge both sloppy Christian (and also many decidedly anti-Christian) ways of thinking which create habits which treat our planet as full of 'resources to be plundered' by consumers and disposed of with little further thought. Gordon has a hearty interest in all of God's world, including, in his piece, music, media, Covid-19 and divine grace. Margaret takes us on a down-to-earth tour, helping us think through the biblical significance of public worship, the rituals and customs that help us worship, and adaptations to Public Health regulations. Katherine, on the other hand tells the story

of how a parish youth programme survived and thrived in the midst of changing rules about gathering. Finally, Martin takes us with him on a journey, bringing geological time into conversation with stories of faith, touching down on biblical passages that are familiar to us as Christians.

It's been hard to remember, these past 10 months, that the true point of human life is, well, human life...not simply avoiding contracting Covid-19. Likewise, it's been hard to keep in mind that the true goal of a community of faith is not avoiding Covid-19 but worshipping, living, and reaching out—in new and challenging circumstances, that require Public Health adaptations.

I am grateful for the wisdom of our provincial administration that has significantly minimized infection rates. I'm grateful to the lay leaders of our parish who have made safe church gatherings possible. And I'm grateful to the whole body of the parish which has suggested and made changes to forms of alternative gathering to supplement our parish life and missions. Let's keep in prayer those in very different and difficult situations around the world.

Paul Friesen+

Love of Creation & Nature in Times of Covid-19

Remember last year, at the beginning of the Covid 19 pandemic, the sadness and despair felt when our Premier closed beaches and trails? Nova Scotians had instinctively sought solace and respite in those early days of the pandemic. City parks and dog parks were closed. I remember the day the *Dartmouth Commons* gates were chained and padlocked. There was a lot of discussion about how keeping an individual from nature could negatively affect their mental health. And I remember the joy on the day that the locks and chains came off that same gate. We were free; our dogs were free. We were back where we belonged!

During these times of Covid 19, the 'Great Pause', we have had many reminders of how we long for and need nature. Are we, as a society, connecting this longing and need with caring and being responsible for creation? In other words, 'will we love creation enough to save it'? Or, will we forget that we are part of creation and need it?



From the beginning of the pandemic, Jane Goodall has been one of those speaking to the connection between Covid-19 and our relationship with nature.

<https://www.msn.com/en-au/news/coronavirus/jane-goodall-says-global-disregard-for-nature-brought-on-coronavirus-pandemic/ar-BB12t90E?ocid=sf>

She states, "... we should have known a pandemic-like coronavirus was coming because other viruses, such as SARS and HIV, also jumped the species barrier from animals." She stresses that the loss of animal habitat and intensive farming are part of the problem. She makes it clear that "... we need to think differently about how we interact with the natural world." Goodall, like many others, has called for a ban on the trade of wildlife and is saying that the human civilization is doomed if we do not adapt our food habits after Covid-19.

https://www.theguardian.com/science/2020/jun/03/jane-goodall-humanity-is-finished-if-it-fails-to-adapt-after-covid19?fbclid=IwAR0unoRVdKRm2Eat9oeT5_zGJnHrKWY6tZ35J_PgIeoOVCVi6Z0_WJkeh2k

Jane Goodall is just one of many who appeal regularly to the human race, also part of nature, to change our relationship WITH nature.



In July 2020, there was episode on *The Weather Channel* warning of the danger of further viruses because of the forest fires and loss of habitat in the Amazon rainforest

<https://www.theweathernetwork.com/ca/news/article/amazon-rainforest-could-be-next-source-of-deadly-viruses-scientists-warn-climate-change>

The United Nations and the World Health Organization have been very vocal on this issue:

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/17/pandemics-destruction-nature-un-who-legislation-trade-greenrecovery?fbclid=IwAR15xPDz665Pd9xEZCj9wqGs6ruRNQzlu4hLuTk83yn33OKSmM_qj69NcI

https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/07/06/888077232/u-n-predicts-rise-in-diseases-that-jump-from-animals-to-humans?fbclid=IwAR0uTiukkOmqfyMGWr8AAAnLr0sZ_8nUS7nUJsEyzQzm5aAfOEEZRHtgw4I

There is no lack of articling, nor lack of information about the seriousness of this issue. It is painfully clear, that unless human beings change, we will be entering into a world where pandemics could be 'the norm'. A world of masks, shutdowns, and isolation:

a future no-one wants to even consider. So how do we plot a different future, a future where the *Dartmouth Commons* remains unchained and we are not banned from our beaches?

We are hearing from many people worldwide on how we need to rethink our relationship to the rest of creation. We humans must protect wildlife and habitats, and we must do it now. We must recognize our place in God's creation. We need to love creation and view ourselves as an integrated part of it. Not just possess creation and misuse it carelessly.

*Nancy Blair is a Parishioner at St. Paul's Church
and an active member of the Diocesan
Environmental Network (DEN),
Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island*



Girded, Grieved and Graced

(A cautionary tale)

The success of the Atlantic Bubble is attracting attention in the United States. CNN decides to interview seniors in Atlantic Canada about their experience during the pandemic. Our music band at St. Paul's has a Facebook page with pictures of band members, with me being the oldest member.

Girded. Sunday Nov 22nd, 6 pm. My son Mark emails that he has been contacted by CNN via our Facebook page. They want to interview seniors from a variety of walks of life. He asks if he should send them my contact information? It's an opportunity to promote the band, so I say 'Yes'. The following morning, CNN contacts me and asks if they can interview me in my home that afternoon? The questions they want to ask are:

- How has covid-19 affected your daily life?
- What do you think of the Atlantic Canada Bubble?
- How many times have you gone into quarantine/traveled outside the bubble?
- We'd love to hear about the band you are in.

Monday Nov 23rd, 3:15 pm. A local producer and cameraman show up at our house. They are 15 minutes earlier than they said they would be, and I haven't yet put on a clean shirt.

I bumble through a 15-minute interview and then, they astonish me by asking me to play something? They tell me that a few seconds

of music provides a good segue between my interview and whatever comes next in the programming. I do my best to play *Sundown*, by Nikki Iles, on our out-of-tune piano, and assure them that I will not be offended if they are not able to use any of my interview or my playing.

Grieved. That same morning, my wife Kathleen had received a call from her office with news that a co-worker had tested positive for Covid. Everyone in Kathleen's department was asked to get tested and to stay home until further instructions were given. The implications do not fully register in our minds. Kathleen's office and the office of the affected person are at opposite ends of a hall, and the nature of their work does not require them to interact. I am pre-occupied with thoughts about my imminent interview with CNN. During the interview, responding to the question about how Covid-19 affected my daily life, I mention that Kathleen had received a call that morning to say that one of her co-workers had tested positive.

Tuesday Nov 24th am. We receive 2 emails. One is from CNN asking me to keep them abreast of information regarding Kathleen's Covid status. Understandably, they are concerned for the two individuals they had sent to interview me in my home. The other email is an official email from Public Health Nova Scotia recommending that all employees at Kathleen's workplace get tested and self-isolate pending the result of

their respective tests. Kathleen's personal risk, given that she has no interaction with the infected person, is categorized as "moderate". (Since Sachi and I live with Kathleen, we also have the same risk category designation.)

Graced. Tuesday Nov 24th pm. Sachi sees on Instagram that there's a place in Halifax where one can be tested at no charge, without having to wait several days for an appointment and for the result. Kathleen goes immediately to be tested and, after waiting in line for two hours, and then one hour more for the result, the result comes back negative. CNN is notified and everyone is relieved.

I had been told that my piece might be aired on Alisyn Camerota's New Day show on Wednesday morning, Nov 25th. I watch every minute, but the entire 3 hours are devoted to the pandemic in the US and issues relating to the transition in the presidency. How do I feel? Am I sad? Does it really matter in the grand scale of things? What matters is that we are loved, that we look out for each other, and that we have a role in God's plan. Kathleen's negative test was God's act of grace. We are all recipients of grace and we are to be agents of grace.

Friday afternoon, the emails start to roll in that our friends saw me on CNN, all 10 seconds, either on Friday morning or on Friday afternoon when the program was repeated.

*Submitted by
Gordon Flowerden
St. Paul's Parishioner and
Musician*



**God is our
refuge,
our
strength,
and our
salvation**

Beyond the Chancel Steps:

Customs and Covid 19

Who hasn't been affected by COVID 19? The Chancel Guild is no exception as we support worship, especially receiving the Eucharist at St. Paul's over recent months. Three things direct what we do and how it is done:

1. The Eucharist as a Central Rite
2. Customs
3. Public Health Regulations

1. The Eucharist as a central rite: Over the years we have been informed of the story of the institution of the Eucharist by Jesus on the night before his crucifixion by reading passages in four books of the New Testament (*Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:17-20; and Corinthians 11:23-25*).

Those passages led to the Prayer of Consecration in the Communion Service, p.82 in the *Canadian Book of Common Prayer*. One helpful way it has been described is as follows: Four actions in the prayer are at the heart of celebrating the Eucharist:

...the same night that he was betrayed, (Jesus) *took Bread*; and when he had *given thanks* to you, he *brake it*; and *gave it* to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is my Body which is given for you: Do this in remembrance of me. Likewise, after supper he took the cup of wine and, when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all, of this; for this is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you

and for many for the remission of sins: Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me." Thus, raising the question, "How do we maintain these actions within Covid 19 restrictions?"

2. Customs: Over the centuries liturgical customs have evolved. We have customs particular to the Anglican way of doing things and at St. Paul's. For example: lay people preparing the wine and bread, sharing a common cup, breaking wafers and pita bread, the priest handling the bread, lay people as chalice bearers, kneeling at the rail before the high communion table, passing the peace, doors open to however many wish to attend a service, sitting and walking close to each other, as well as speaking and singing unmasked. Customs, customs, customs, all things needing to be reconsidered under Covid 19 restrictions while adhering to the main activities of the Eucharistic rite and gathering for a service.

3. Public Health Regulations: As civil regulations evolve the SafeR Church Committee responds by setting policies for Chancel Guild and others to follow.

Wednesday Communion – In June when ten people were allowed to gather, the Wednesday 11 o'clock Communion service in the Chancel resumed. We sign in and out, spacers are set out for seating in alternate

pews in the Chancel, social distances are encouraged at the rail and we are asked to stand (to avoid touching it). Small paper cups are used, and consecrated wine is poured from a common cruet rather than sharing the chalice. Masks and sanitizer are used when consecrating the bread and wine and while preparing vessels and elements in the Vestry. Since September, a lay person has been assisting the celebrant.



Communion in the Nave - During July, BAS communion services were held for up to ten people on Wednesday evenings in the Nave. Using the Nave meant there was more than 72 hours between the Nave and the Chancel areas being re-used, a safe Public Health practice. In addition to following the practices instituted for Wednesday morning services, "bubble pews" were designated to socially distance individuals and households in the Nave. Individuals, one at a time, approached the celebrant to receive a wafer

and then approached the assistant (6 feet to the right) extending their small cup to receive wine.

Sunday Communion - On August 30th, Sunday communion services resumed. Our doors now open to more than 10. In fact, up to 150 were accommodated in designated "bubble pews" allowing for the required social distance between individuals and households. Everyone is expected to wear masks except when leading service and receiving the elements. The practices initiated in June at the Wednesday services around registering at the door, using sanitizer, having wafers rather than breaking pita bread, using a common cruet and individual cups had been expanded for more people and the celebrant assisted by the theological intern. Sunday, November 29th we returned to *Video Services* only due to a '2nd wave of Covid' until the Province allowed us to reopen again, with a 100-person maximum on Christmas Eve.

Directed by the SafeR Church Committee and the Rector, the Chancel Guild adapted procedures for setting up safely for the Eucharist. Thus, we can all continue collectively, respecting Public Health restrictions and by adapting customs, to take both bread and wine, give thanks, break and bless both elements, and receive them. If we adhere to the changing protocols established, we will continue to keep safe and be blessed by the grace gained by participating in the Eucharist and communing together.

*Submitted by Margaret Bateman Ellison,
Co-Director, St. Paul's Chancel Guild*

From the Youth Group

With the relaxing of restrictions to allow the gathering of small groups in July, the newly formed St Paul's Youth Group began meeting weekly over the summer at Parish House. I had the pleasure of leading the group, alongside Benjamin von Bredow, the parish divinity intern. Adriel Driver acted as Parent Coordinator and also took on the very important job of organizing snacks. We were joined by a group of around six to ten youth over the summer, including several from St Paul's and from outside the parish, for games, prayer, discussion, and the building of some very unstable spaghetti towers. We followed the 622 curricula for youth, based on the service order for youth on page 622 of the Book of Common Prayer, with a focus on the meaning and purpose of prayer, both personal and communal, and the development of

personal prayer habits. Supplementing the curriculum were several youth-suggested topics, including the creation of the world, the end of the world and the Devil. Along with the reading of scripture, Benjamin taught and led the plain chant of a psalm each week. The youth in the group, when asked, said that they enjoyed coming because "I get to have fun with and hang out with kids my own age", "I can say what I think" and "I like the positive vibe of the group!". The Youth Group continued throughout the fall and has been reactivated since the Christmas break.

Katherine Lee
St. Paul's Youth Group Co-Leader



In a Dry and Weary Land

A Winter Read - for Some People

“O God, thou art my God, I seek thee,
My soul thirsts for thee,
my flesh faints for thee,
As in a dry and weary land where no water is.”
(Psalm 63)

So speaks David, the psalmist, from the desert country west of the Dead Sea – a land of dry water courses, where David hid in the ravine of Ein Gedi from King Saul. I remember the barren deserts of the Dead Sea, Sinai and Negev, landscapes of rock and sand where the only water trickles from a cliff face, and a wind-sculpted rock provides shelter from the blistering sun. Halifax receives 1400 millimetres of precipitation each year, but Sinai receives only 40 millimetres, often from a single storm when the wadis explode into brief flash floods. The parched desert is a familiar biblical metaphor for difficult times in our lives.

But the Near East was not always like this. Recent research has started to paint a fascinating picture of human history and climate change, drawing on oxygen isotope records from stalagmites in caves near Jerusalem, as well as the changing level of the Dead Sea.

The biblical record is not always easy to validate. However, Abraham is considered to have lived in about 1,800 BC (nearly 4,000 years ago in the Near East Bronze Age), the Exodus took place in about 1,400 BC, and David was king in about 1,000 BC (in the Iron

Age). The Bible yields an unrivalled insight into the daily lives of Bronze and Iron Age peoples -- Rebekah covering her face as Isaac alights from his camel; Benaiah going down into a pit on a snowy day to kill a lion.

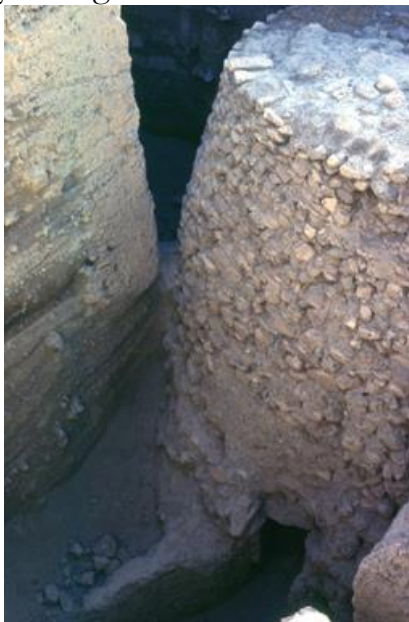
As the ice sheets melted back some 18,000 years ago, atmospheric circulation and ocean currents adjusted across the Northern Hemisphere, heralding a rise in temperature and rainfall in the Near East. From 10,000 to 7,000 years ago, rainfall in the Jordan Valley was double what it is today. Rivers flowed strongly, lakes were widespread across the Sahara, and the Dead Sea was at a high level. By 10,000 years ago, the “Neolithic Revolution in Agriculture” was well advanced as villagers cultivated cereal and other crops and domesticated sheep, goats, cattle, and pigs. Within a few thousand years, most villagers in the region had become farmers. The donkey – the beast of burden par excellence -- was domesticated in Egypt more than 6,000 years ago.

About 10,000 years ago, settlers began to irrigate crops from a spring at Jericho in the Jordan Valley. The watchtower at Jericho (possibly to provide warning of flash floods) was discovered in Kathleen Kenyon's excavations in the 1950s and is among the oldest known human structures. Jericho has

also yielded the first sundried bricks, dating to 9,500 years ago and still bearing the fingerprints of the makers. By 6,000 years ago,

the first cities were established in Mesopotamia, and irrigation canals crisscrossed the alluvial plains of the Tigris and Euphrates.

And then the rain fell away, at the whim of unpredictable westerly winds. By 5,000 years ago, the formerly well watered eastern Sahara was largely depopulated as people moved into the Nile Valley with its predictable flow from the Ethiopian Highlands. At the time of the Exodus, the Dead Sea was some 40 metres lower than it had been a thousand years earlier. The lake may have reached its lowest level during King David's reign, and it remained low through much of Old Testament times, starting to rise in about 400 BC when Nehemiah was rebuilding Jerusalem. Climate change across the Near East often had catastrophic consequences. A sudden climatic deterioration 8,200 years ago has been linked to vast flows of freshwater when Glacial Lake Agassiz broke out from Hudson Bay into the Atlantic. A major drought 4,200 years ago has been linked to the collapse of



(The watchtower at Jericho, about 10,000 years old)

the Akkadian Empire of Mesopotamia, as climate refugees fled the region and settlements were abandoned to the jackals.

There are many reasons why Abraham might have left Ur of the Chaldees: was drought among them?

Droughts and famines are all too familiar in the Old Testament narrative as an arid climate pushed farmers to the brink of survival. A severe famine in Canaan brought Joseph's brothers to Egypt in search of grain. Elijah meets the widow of Zarephath gathering sticks to cook a final meal before she and her son starved to death. Faced also with warfare, disease, and high infant mortality, the peoples of the Near East knew what it meant to live on the edge. Crying out to God in a dry and weary land was not just a metaphor.

We live in the well watered land of Nova Scotia, blessed with medical support, insurance, and a social net. But the Covid-19 pandemic has reminded us of our vulnerability. During this challenging time, the words of David may give us strength: "For thou hast been my help, and in the shadow of thy wings I sing for joy".

(below: an oasis in the Sinai Desert)



*Submitted by Martin Gibling
St. Paul's Parishioner and Musician*

St. Paul's Church, Halifax
Liturgies & Readings: Ash Wednesday to Pentecost 2021

26 January 2021

17 Feb.	Ash Wednesday <i>Purple</i>	11 am	Eucharist <i>BCP</i>	6:30 pm	Eucharist <i>BAS</i>
	<i>Isaiah 58.1-12</i>		<i>Psalm 51</i>		<i>II Cor. 5.16 – 6.10</i> <i>Matthew 6.1-6; 16-21</i>
21 Feb.	Lent 1 <i>Purple</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BAS</i>		
	<i>Genesis 9:8-17</i>		<i>Psalm 25:1-10</i>		<i>1 Peter 3:18-22</i> <i>Mark 1:9-15</i>
28 Feb.	Lent 2 <i>Purple</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BCP</i>		
	<i>Genesis 17:1-16</i>		<i>Psalm 22:22-31</i>		<i>Romans 4:13-25</i> <i>Mark 8:31-38</i>
7 March	Lent 3 <i>Purple</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BAS</i>		<i>AGM</i>
	<i>Exodus 20.1-17</i>		<i>Psalm 19</i>		<i>I Corinthians 1.18-25</i> <i>John 2.13-22</i>
14 March	Lent 4 <i>Purple</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BCP</i>		
	<i>Numbers 21:4-9</i>		<i>Psalm 107</i>		<i>Ephesians 2:1-10</i> <i>John 3:14-21</i>
21 March	Lent 5 <i>Purple</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BAS</i>		
	<i>Jeremiah 31:31-34</i>		<i>Psalm 119:9-16</i>		<i>Hebrews 5:1-10</i> <i>John 12:20-33</i>
28 March	Palm Sunday <i>Red</i>	10 am	+Eucharist & Palm Procession <i>BCP</i>		
	<i>Isaiah 50:4-9a</i>		<i>Psalm 31:1-19</i>		<i>Philippians 2:5-11</i> <i>Mark 11:1-11 & 15.1-47</i>
31 March	Holy Wednesday <i>Red</i>	11am	Holy Eucharist <i>BCP</i>		
	<i>Hebrews 9.15-28</i>		<i>Psalm 102</i>		<i>Luke 22.1-71</i>
1 April	Maundy Thursday <i>Red</i>	6 pm	Holy Eucharist <i>BAS</i>		
	<i>Exodus 12:1-14</i>		<i>Psalm 116</i>		<i>1 Corinthians 11:23-26</i> <i>John 13:1-17; 31b-35</i>
2 April	Good Friday <i>Bare</i>	12 pm	Liturgy of the Cross <i>BAS</i>		
	<i>Multiple biblical readings TBA</i>				
3 April	Holy Saturday <i>White</i>	7 pm	Easter Vigil <i>BAS</i>		
	<i>Multiple biblical readings TBA</i>				
4 April	Easter Sunday <i>White</i>	10 am	+All-Ages Eucharist <i>BAS</i>		
	<i>Acts 10:34-43</i>		<i>Psalm 118:1-2; 14-24</i>		<i>1 Corinthians 15:1-11</i> <i>Mark 16.1-8</i>
11 April	Octave Day of Easter <i>White</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BCP</i>		
	<i>Acts 4:32-35</i>		<i>Psalm 133</i>		<i>1 John 1:1-2:2</i> <i>John 20:19-31</i>
18 April	Easter 3 <i>White</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BAS</i>		
	<i>Acts 3:12-19</i>		<i>Psalm 4</i>		<i>1 John 3:1-7</i> <i>Luke 24:36b-48</i>
25 April	Easter 4 <i>White</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BCP</i>		
	<i>Acts 4:5-12</i>		<i>Psalm 23</i>		<i>1 John 3:16-24</i> <i>John 10:11-18</i>
2 May	Easter 5 <i>White</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BAS</i>		
	<i>Acts 8:26-40</i>		<i>Psalm 22:22-31</i>		<i>1 John 4:7-21</i> <i>John 15:1-8</i>
9 May	Easter 6 <i>White</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BCP</i>		
	<i>Acts 10:44-48</i>		<i>Psalm 98</i>		<i>1 John 5:1-6</i> <i>John 15:9-17</i>
16 May	Ascension Sunday <i>White</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BAS</i>		
	<i>Acts 1:1-11</i>		<i>Psalm 47</i>		<i>Ephesians 1.15-23</i> <i>Luke 24.44-53</i>
23 May	Pentecost <i>Red</i>	10 am	+Youth & Adults Eucharist <i>BCP</i>		
	<i>Ezekiel 37:1-14</i>		<i>Psalm 104:25-35</i>		<i>Acts 2:1-21</i> <i>John 15.26-27, 16.4b-15</i>
30 May	Trinity <i>White</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BAS</i>		
	<i>Isaiah 6.1-8</i>		<i>Psalm 29</i>		<i>Romans 8.12-17</i> <i>John 3.1-17</i>
6 June	Pentecost 2 <i>Green</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BCP</i>		
	<i>I Samuel 8.1-22</i>		<i>Psalm 138</i>		<i>II Corinthians 4.13-5.5</i> <i>Mark 3.19b-35</i>
13 June	Pentecost 3 <i>Green</i>	10 am	Eucharist <i>BAS</i> + <i>S.S Celebration</i>		
	<i>I Samuel 8.4-20</i>		<i>Psalm 138</i>		<i>II Corinthians 4.13-18</i> <i>Mark 3.20-35</i>

*Please note: however changing public health regulations may determine our forms of gathering, this is the schedule to be followed.

+Liturgies potentially involving Youth and Children's roles; details will be determined closer to the date



St. Paul's Church
An Historic Church
Serving the Living God since 1749
 Anglican Church of Canada, Diocese of N.S & P.E.I.

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Submissions to *St. Paul's Journal* are always welcome.

Why not submit a spiritual reflection, prayer, poem, or a book review?

Please keep alert for the next issue of the St. Paul's Journal to be announced.