

*Transforming  
Lives Through  
Jesus Christ*

# ***SWORD POINTS***

September 4, 2025

[www.SaintPaulsBrookfield.com](http://www.SaintPaulsBrookfield.com)

(203) 775-9587



✝ Just like the clay in the potter's  
hand, so are you in my hand



## † Counting the Cost, It Isn't All Just Loaves & Fishes

From the potter, to the shadow God who sees all, to Paul and Onesimus [oh-nee-see-mus], to another sobering pronouncement by Jesus, it's a busy week in Lectionary Land. Although God in Jeremiah is not happy with the house of Israel in that moment, there is great hope and comfort in the hands of the potter who can reshape and reform the vessels into more useful and pleasing containers. There is much beauty in the appointed verses for this week's Psalm since the really difficult ones are left for us to discover inside our Book of Common Prayer or Bible.

Philemon [fuh-lee-mon], quite an amazing little letter in only 25 verses. There are far more paragraphs written about this letter than there are in it and it has a very interesting back-story and questions - is Onesimus a runaway slave? - certainly this piece was used by the great and God-fearing as justification for the horrendous institution of slavery in our own and other shameful national histories. One won't ever know for certain but Paul - following the law and culture of the land and time - reminds us that even in our own time, regardless of this or any other man, woman, or child's status, she, he, they are to be welcomed as a beloved brother or sister.

And then there's the discomfiting Gospel admonishing those of us who would travel with Jesus to hate family and even life itself and give up all possessions or we cannot become disciples. But in pondering and reading all the words such as *Now large crowds were traveling with Jesus* [Luke 14:25a] it occurs that maybe he was tiring of the party groupies who were merely enjoying hanging out with this celebrity and not quite understanding the full importance of his teaching. This certainly would have gotten their attention as it does ours. Perhaps that was the point. He goes on with the analogy of building a tower - reasonable for us to consider now - who wouldn't begin a building project by estimating the cost? As for warring kings, there are other parallels for us to envision such as the long-term implications of political policy that helps or hinders the lives of any of God's people and Creation itself.

Traveling with Jesus isn't all just loaves and fishes. It IS a hard road but who of us are able to imagine the cost of giving up our families and all of our possessions? Last week Paul told us to be content with what we have and in Luke, Jesus was telling us how not to exalt ourselves. There is much the same this week - a recurring theme of Scripture is not getting caught up in earthly delights or gathering wealth or possessions but to focus on the goal of

everlasting life in Christ. Prayer, missteps, loving community are all along the way if we use them wisely as tools to help. We are clay in God's hands - unfired, therefore pliable and flexible, not like finished ceramics that are fragile and break beyond repair. The journey is not easy and the cost may be great, but we are never alone and always easily patched up and re-shaped to begin again. This isn't just a hobby for groupies to follow when convenient though sometimes having a hobby is the start of something much bigger. This is a calling and there is a price. We'll have many wrong turns and unholy moments but if our intent is true, we will be whole and more holy when we arrive at our ultimate destination.



**Cover Artwork:**  
"A person making  
a vase out of clay"

by David Trinks for  
Unsplash, 2024.

## ✠ *This Week at St. Paul's*

- |              |            |   |
|--------------|------------|---|
| Thu, Sep 4   | - 9:30 am  | - Iron Sharpens Iron Discussion Group, Guild Room   |
|              | 11:30 am   | - Chronic Pain Support Group, Guild Room  |
|              | 7:30 pm    | - Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary  |
|              | 7:30 pm    | - Property Committee, Guild Room  |
| Fri, Sep 5   | - 10:00 am | - St. Paul's Walking Group, Brookfield Greenway   |
| Sat, Sep 6   | - 7:30 am  | - <u>John 21:12</u> Group, Theo's Downtown Diner, New Milford                                     |
|              | 8:00 am    | - Men's Prayer Breakfast, Crocker Hall  |
|              | Morning    | - Young Men's Hike (Williams Park)  |
|              | Lunch      | - Young Men's Fellowship (Newsylum Brewery)   |
| Sun, Sep 7   |            | <b>The 13th Sunday after Pentecost</b>  |
|              |            | <b>"Bring a Friend to Church Sunday"</b>  |
|              | - 8:00 am  | - <b>Traditional Holy Communion</b> ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> )                              |
|              | 9:30 am    | - P-I-C Listening Session, Crocker Hall   |
|              | 10:30 am   | - <b>Blessing of Backpacks &amp; Contemporary Holy Communion</b> ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> ) |
| Mon, Sep 8   | - 7:00 pm  | - Men's Bible Study, Crocker Hall ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> )                                |
| Tues, Sep 9  | - 9:30 am  | - Ladies Tuesday AM Bible Study, Guild Room   |
|              | 7:00 pm    | - Scout Troop #5, Meadow  |
| Wed, Sep 10  | - 10:00 am | - <b>Holy Communion &amp; Healing</b> ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> )                            |
|              | - 7:00 pm  | - Ladies Evening Zoom Bible Study ( <a href="#">Zoom</a> )  |
|              | 7:30 pm    | - Vestry Meeting, Guild Room  |
| Thu, Sep 11  | - 9:30 am  | - Iron Sharpens Iron Discussion Group, Guild Room   |
|              | 7:30 pm    | - Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary  |
| Sat, Sep 13  | - 7:30 am  | - <u>John 21:12</u> Group, Theo's Downtown Diner, Bridgewater                                     |
|              | 8:00 am    | - Men's Prayer Breakfast, Crocker Hall  |
| Sun, Sep 14  |            | <b>The 14th Sunday after Pentecost</b>  |
|              |            | <b>"Volunteer Appreciation Sunday"</b>  |
|              | - 8:00 am  | - <b>Traditional Holy Communion</b> ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> )                              |
|              | 9:30 am    | - Adult Class, Guild Room   |
|              | 10:30 am   | - Sunday School, Classrooms   |
|              | 10:30 am   | - <b>Contemporary Holy Communion</b> ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> )                             |
| Mon, Sep 15  | - 7:00 pm  | - Men's Bible Study, Crocker Hall ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> )                                |
| Tues, Sep 16 | - 9:30 am  | - Ladies Tuesday AM Bible Study, Guild Room   |
|              | 7:00 pm    | - Scout Troop #5, Meadow  |
| Wed, Sep 17  | - 10:00 am | - <b>Holy Communion &amp; Healing</b> ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> )                            |
|              | 11 to Noon | - Drive-Thru Food Collection #142   |
|              | - 7:00 pm  | - Ladies Evening Zoom Bible Study ( <a href="#">Zoom</a> )  |
| Thu, Sep 18  | - 9:30 am  | - Iron Sharpens Iron Discussion Group, Guild Room   |
|              | 7:30 pm    | - Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary  |
| Sat, Sep 20  | - 7:30 am  | - <u>John 21:12</u> Group, Theo's Downtown Diner, New Milford                                     |
|              | 8:00 am    | - Men's Prayer Breakfast, Crocker Hall  |
|              | 10:00 am   | - St. Paul's Quilters, Crocker Hall   |
| Sun, Sep 21  |            | <b>The 15th Sunday after Pentecost</b>  |
|              | - 8:00 am  | - <b>Traditional Holy Communion</b> ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> )                              |
|              | 9:30 am    | - Adult Class, Guild Room   |
|              | 10:30 am   | - Sunday School, Classrooms   |
|              | 10:30 am   | - <b>Contemporary Holy Communion</b> ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> )                             |
| Mon, Sep 22  | - 7:00 pm  | - Men's Bible Study, Crocker Hall ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> )                                |
| Tues, Sep 23 | - 9:30 am  | - Ladies Tuesday AM Bible Study, Guild Room   |
|              | 7:00 pm    | - Scout Troop #5, Meadow  |
| Wed, Sep 24  | - 10:00 am | - <b>Holy Communion &amp; Healing</b> ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> )                            |
|              | - 7:00 pm  | - Ladies Evening Zoom Bible Study ( <a href="#">Zoom</a> )  |
| Thu, Sep 25  | - 9:30 am  | - Iron Sharpens Iron Discussion Group, Guild Room   |
|              | 7:30 pm    | - Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary  |
| Sat, Sep 27  | - 7:30 am  | - <u>John 21:12</u> Group, Theo's Downtown Diner, New Milford                                     |
|              | 8:00 am    | - Men's Prayer Breakfast, Crocker Hall  |
| Sun, Sep 28  |            | <b>The 16th Sunday after Pentecost</b>  |
|              | - 8:00 am  | - <b>Traditional Holy Communion</b> ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> )                              |
|              | 9:30 am    | - Adult Class, Guild Room   |
|              | 10:30 am   | - Sunday School, Classrooms   |
|              | 10:30 am   | - <b>Contemporary Holy Communion</b> ( <a href="#">YouTube Live</a> )                             |

*Check our website daily for schedule updates.*

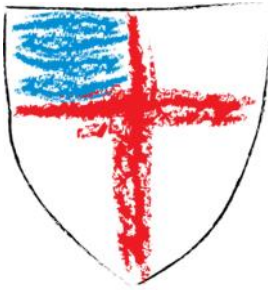
This will be the last issue of *Sword Points* until September 25th, after our pilgrims return from the Holy Land.





## The Priest-in-Charge WEEKLY

Fr. Nate, our Priest-in-Charge is distributing a weekly e-mail to communicate things directly from his desk to yours. **Connection, communication, and care** are among the highest priorities of his new ministry, and he wants to make sure there are regular touch points between us. If you would like to receive "*The Priest-in-Charge Weekly*" and **already receive weekly e-mails from St. Paul's**, you don't have to do anything - you're already included on the list! If you would like to receive "*The Priest-in-Charge Weekly*" and **DO NOT receive weekly e-mails from St. Paul's**, or if you want to opt out, write Fr. Nate at [priest@saintpaulsbrookfield.com](mailto:priest@saintpaulsbrookfield.com) and let him know.



† Ih-pis-kuh-puh l / Dik-shuh-ner-ee

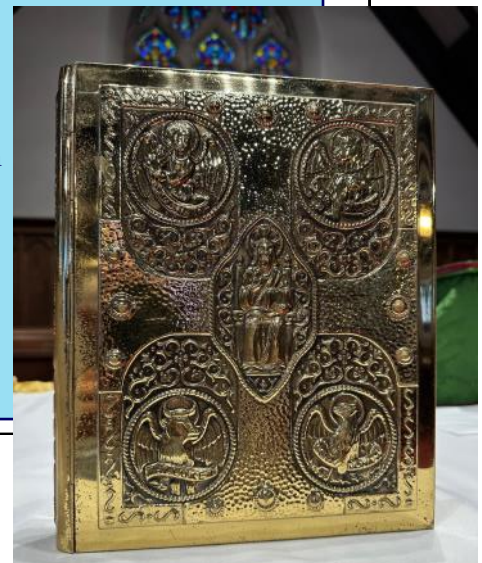
(Episcopal Dictionary)



† Gospel Book

/ gos-puhl / book /

**Gospel Book** - From ancient times the gospel pericopes have been collected in a large book with an ornate cover, often illustrated and adorned with icons and jewels. This practice was recovered with the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP), which suggests that the lessons and gospel "be read from a book or books of appropriate size and dignity" (BCP, p. 406). Following this advice, several publishers have produced gospel books for use in the Episcopal Church, and other books have been privately compiled. A deacon or server usually carries the gospel book in the entrance procession and places it on the altar until time for the gospel proclamation. Afterward, it may be returned to the altar or placed on a side table or a stand. The Second Council of Nicaea in 787 decreed that icons, crosses, and gospel books may be venerated as sacred images, just as the incarnate Christ is the image of the invisible God.







*Join us for*

# Friend SUNDAY

*At St. Paul's Church*

**This Sunday,  
September 7th  
8 & 10:30 AM**

## HOW DO PEOPLE START ATTENDING CHURCH?

A Friend Invited Me - 86%

Organized Visitation - 6%

Invited by the Pastor - 6%

Advertising - 2%

[churchgrowth.org](http://churchgrowth.org)

## † Warning and Grace

[Jeremiah 18:1-11](#) - [Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17](#) - [Philemon 1-21](#) - [Luke 14:25-33](#)

God takes all the fragments of our lives and fashions them into a new life according to his will. The potter of his own will made and remade vessels. He is completely in charge. Although he forms the vessel, it might still be marred and imperfect. He does not throw out the corrupt vessel, but uses the same clay to make a new vessel that is right in his eyes.

As Christians, we believe that we are made by God and called to be his people. Over the ages, God has revealed his will to us and given us commandments that demonstrate how we are to live as his vessels of blessing. We, however, sin against God by placing our will above his will. We congratulate ourselves on our achievements and prosperity. Mistakenly, we think we are in control of our destiny. Then we are crushed by circumstances beyond our control or by the consequences of our bad choices. But that is not the end of the story. Through the negative experiences we are remolded into something else if we repent. It is repentance that keeps our clay soft enough to be reworked.

The parallels are obvious. There is an application of this passage, however, at a more

spiritually subtle and perhaps more practical level. That is at the level of our perceived role in world events. We are burdened and unsettled about what seems to us to be a chaotic future. The challenges we face both at home and abroad are enough to raise the level of angst in the most dedicated hermit. Wars and rumors of wars dominate the news cycles, with the ever-present threat of a nuclear conflict just behind the curtain. Riots seem to be the preferred form of protest on just about anything. In our hubris we are convinced that it is up to us to solve all the problems. We have persuaded ourselves that we carry the responsibility for achieving world peace, not to mention eliminating terrorism, poverty, hunger, pollution, and global warming.

What *are* we going to do? Of course, we will try to love our neighbors, share our wealth, conserve the world's resources, and decrease our carbon footprint. But what we will not accomplish is world peace, or eliminate terrorism, hunger, poverty, pollution, or global warming. There is a good chance that, even in a democracy, we will not elect the candidate we personally favor in our next election. Our lives will continue to be marred by anxiety.

The answer to our angst does not lie in our abilities or power. There has never been a vessel that was successfully created by a lump of clay! We are anxious because we think we are in control. We are in despair because of our fear that we will not make a difference. We are frustrated and angry because the world does not see the obvious wisdom of our opinions and the logical superiority of our actions. We are troubled because we have forgotten that we are not the potter - we are the clay.

The good news is that as clay in the Potter's hands, we can be refashioned into effective forces for good in this world. But we can only be so refashioned if we will stop trying to be the potter and allow God to rework us. Humility is the tranquility of faith and the antidote to our anxiety. As the Potter, God has the plan and will produce a future that is right in his eyes.

We need not worry - as clay in his hands, we only need to have faith and rely on God.

**Look It Up:** Luke 14:26

**Think About It:** Our declaration to Jesus when we commit to following him is the vow to forsake all others and be faithful to him as long as we live, regardless of the circumstances we encounter in this world.

- by The Rev. Dr. Chuck Alley, *The Living Church*, 2025



*Clay Pots | Chris Linnett/Unsplash*





**Blessing of the Backpacks** - On Sunday, September 7th at the 10:30 service, there will be a blessing of the backpacks for all students! Students of all ages are encouraged to bring their backpack to the service to receive a special "Back to School" blessing!



The Jericho Partnership sends a huge thank you to St. Paul's Parish! Their backpack drive, led by Kagan, Kronberg, mom of three, brought a carload of notebooks, paper, pencil boxes, and folders for our students. St. Paul's Church also generously supports the Jericho Partnership Food Pantry, helping us provide essential food and supplies to families in need. We're so grateful for their ongoing partnership and commitment to our community!

### ✠ **New Adult Class Begins September 14th**

An exciting new adult Christian Formation series starting Sunday, September 14. More than anything else, Christ came to earth to instill faith in God and trust in his promises. Faith isn't optional - it's the heartbeat of the Christian life. Join us as we explore what faith really is, how it works in everyday life, and how it deepens our walk with God. The Adult Class meets weekly on Sundays between services starting at 9:30 in Guild Room.



### ✠ **Transforming Stewardship**

*"Everyone of you who does not renounce all his possessions cannot be my disciple."*  
Luke 14:33

When we first hear this statement, it seems that Jesus is making an unrealistic demand upon us. How can we renounce all of our possessions? We need them to live. However, what we must renounce is the belief that they belong to us. Everything that we have belongs to God alone. All of our resources are entrusted to us not only for our own use, but also so that we can help others. Once we renounce the idea that we possess or are entitled to anything, it is much easier to share the many gifts that God has given us. Then we truly are His Disciples.

## ✠ Start Spreading the Good News!

“And I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ.”



## ✠ Priest-in-Charge Listening Session

The second of this year's quarterly Priest-in-Charge Listening Sessions will be held this Sunday, September 7th in Crocker Hall at 9:30 a.m. These gatherings are part of our ongoing commitment to fostering a culture of safety, connection, and shared purpose within the parish. This is an opportunity to ask questions, share reflections, and hear about where we've been and where we're headed as a community. Your presence helps strengthen the fabric of our common life.

## ✠ St. Paul's Walking Group!

Our St. Paul's walking group is making a comeback! We will set up a day and time to meet each week for a walk and possibly stop somewhere after to rehydrate. The group is open to anyone that is interested. Weather permitting, our first walk will be at the Brookfield Greenway on Friday Sept 5 at 10:00 am. We should plan to meet at the parking lot by the police station. Ron Switzer ([rjswit@msn.com](mailto:rjswit@msn.com)) will check the weather and send out an update e-mail by the Thursday before.



## ✠ Sunday School Info!

ATTN: PARENTS OF ALL SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS:

**Sunday School Resumes September 14th -** Sunday School classes for kindergarten through grade 8 will resume Sunday, September 14 at 10:30 am.

## COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Sep 7th 8 am - Mary & Chuck Allen  
Sep 14th 8 am - Crocker's  
Sep 21st 8 am - Ann & Dave Allen

10:30 am - Tilford's  
10:30 am - Pam Koniecki  
10:30 am - Switzer's



**COFFEE HOUR  
HOSTS NEEDED**

Contact Mary Allen at  
203-775-6633 or  
[chamla@charter.net](mailto:chamla@charter.net)





## † This Date on the Church Calendar

*Monday, September 8th*

### The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

**T**he gospels tell us little about the family and home of our Lord's mother. She is thought to have been of Davidic descent and to have been brought up in a devout Jewish family that cherished the hope of Israel for the coming kingdom of God, in remembrance of the promise to Abraham and the forefathers.



In the second century, a devout Christian sought to supply a fuller account of Mary's birth and family, to satisfy the interest and curiosity of believers. An apocryphal gospel, known as the Protevangelium of James or The Nativity of Mary, appeared. It included legendary stories of Mary's parents, Joachim and Anne. These stories were built out of Old Testament narratives of the births of Isaac and of Samuel (whose mother's name, Hannah, is the original form of Anne), and from traditions of the birth of John the Baptist. In these stories, Joachim and Anne - the childless, elderly couple who grieved that they would have no Posterity - were rewarded with the birth of a girl, whom they dedicated in infancy to the service of God under the tutelage of the temple priests.

Many provinces of the Anglican Communion celebrate September 8 rather than August 15 as their primary Marian feast.

Although we do not know the truth of Mary's parentage or birth, we nevertheless rejoice for those who brought her into this world, and who raised her in such a way that even as a young woman she was able to give a courageous "yes" in response to her call from God.

*The Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary*  
by Giotto, in the Scrovegni Chapel  
Padua, Italy (c. 1305)

## † Hating One's Family

**I**n Sunday's Gospel, Jesus says something shocking, "Anyone who comes to me without hating father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, yes and his own life too, cannot be my disciple." We should realize that it was intended to provoke a response. If we took his words literally, it would be the exact opposite of all that he preached. But are the words meant in the literal sense?

Jesus used what we might call "reverse psychology" to elicit a commitment from his disciples. Many came to him because he was a free physician. They had only a passing or no interest in his teachings. His words might be interpreted to say, "Anyone who wants to be my follower must love me far more than he does his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, or sisters--yes, more than his own life--otherwise he cannot be my disciple" (Today's English version of the Bible).



# Take note

by Kirsten Peterson, Organist & Choirmaster

Greetings!

This Sunday we'll pray off our pilgrims headed to the Holy Land on Tuesday! In honor of that event, we'll sing "Jerusalem, My Happy Home" at the 8:00 service. While we've sung it many times before, I have never really looked into the background of the hymn. Read on to see what I uncovered!

Here is the text:

*Jerusalem, my happy home, when shall I come to thee?*

*When shall my sorrows have an end? Thy joys when shall I see?*

*Thy saints are crowned with glory great; they see God face to face;  
they triumph still, they still rejoice in that most happy place.*

*There David stands with harp in hand as master of the choir:  
ten thousand times would one be blest who might this music hear.*

*Our Lady sings Magnificat with tune surpassing sweet,  
and blessed martyrs' harmony doth ring in every street.*

*Jerusalem, Jerusalem, God grant that I may see  
thine endless joy, and of the same partaker every be!*



The words are attributed in our *Hymnal 1982* to F.B.P. That already sounds kind of mysterious...and it is! The best guess is that it could refer to a 16th century Catholic priest from England, possibly referring to "Francis Baker, Priest." He was apparently persecuted by Queen Elizabeth for his views.

*(Continued on page 11)*



(Continued from page 10)

## Choir Notes

But we can't just stop there, because this very old hymn may actually date back to Aurelius Augustine of Hippo (353-430)! The text is thought to be drawn in part from his *Book of Meditations* (*Liber Meditationum*) of which part was versified by Peter Damien (c988-1072) in his *Ad perennis vitae fontem*. Along about 1600 or so, a 26-verse version of the hymn appeared in English translation, a version which is housed at the British Museum. New verses have been added, some have been retained, some have been excluded, and the version that most often appears today was published in 1801 in the *Eckington Collection* by James Boden (1757-1841). So, I don't think we have any definitive information on authorship.

What we have left to fall back on is the meaning of the text: "Jerusalem" represents the eternal home of the redeemed in heaven. Such souls are greeted by the familiar figures of David and Mary. The underlying theme is one of longing for a heavenly home, where sorrows end and joy abounds. This certainly ties in with Aurelius Augustine of Hippo's original meditation which was based on the Book of Revelation.

So we bid farewell to our faithful pilgrims as they head toward Jerusalem, and may it be a trip that abounds with joy!

Peace and blessings,

Kirsten



Augustine of Hippo



**Jerusalem, my happy home,  
When shall I come to thee?  
When shall my sorrows have an end?  
Thy joys when shall I see?**



## † Saints of God

Thursday, September 4th

**Paul Jones,**  
Bishop, 1941

Paul Jones was born in 1880 in the rectory of St. Stephen's Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. After graduating from Yale University and the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, he accepted a call to serve a mission in Logan, Utah. In 1914, he was appointed archdeacon of the Missionary District of Utah and, later that year, was elected its bishop. Meanwhile, World War I had begun.

As Bishop of Utah, Paul Jones did much to expand the church's mission stations and to strengthen diocesan institutions. At the same time, he spoke openly about his opposition to war. With the entry of the United States into the war, the Bishop of Utah's views became increasingly controversial. At a meeting of the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Los Angeles in 1917, Bishop Jones expressed his belief that "war is unchristian," for which he was attacked with banner headlines in the Utah press.

As a result of the speech and the reaction it caused in Utah, a commission of the House of Bishops was appointed to investigate the situation. In their report, the commission concluded that "The underlying contention of the Bishop of Utah seems to be that war is unchristian. With this general statement the Commission cannot agree . . ." The report went on to recommend that "The Bishop of Utah ought to resign his office," thus rejecting Paul Jones' right to object to war on grounds of faith and conscience.

In the spring of 1918, Bishop Jones, yielding to pressure, resigned as Bishop of Utah. In his farewell to the Missionary District of Utah in 1918, Bishop Jones said: "Where I serve the Church is of small importance, so long as I can make my life count in the cause of Christ . . . Expediency may make necessary the resignation of a bishop at this time, but no expedience can ever justify the degradation of the

ideals of the episcopate which these conclusions seem to involve."

For the rest of his life, he continued a ministry within the church dedicated to peace and conscience, speaking always with a conviction and gentleness rooted in the gospel. Bishop Jones died on September 4, 1941.



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## Our Daily Bread

*Our Daily Bread* for September, October & November is now available on the table in the back of the church. *Our Daily Bread* contains a scripture verse and meditation for each day.





## ✠ *Art in the Christian Tradition*

### Construction du Temple de Jérusalem,

by Jean Fouquet (c. 1420–1481),

Oil and gold paint on vellum,

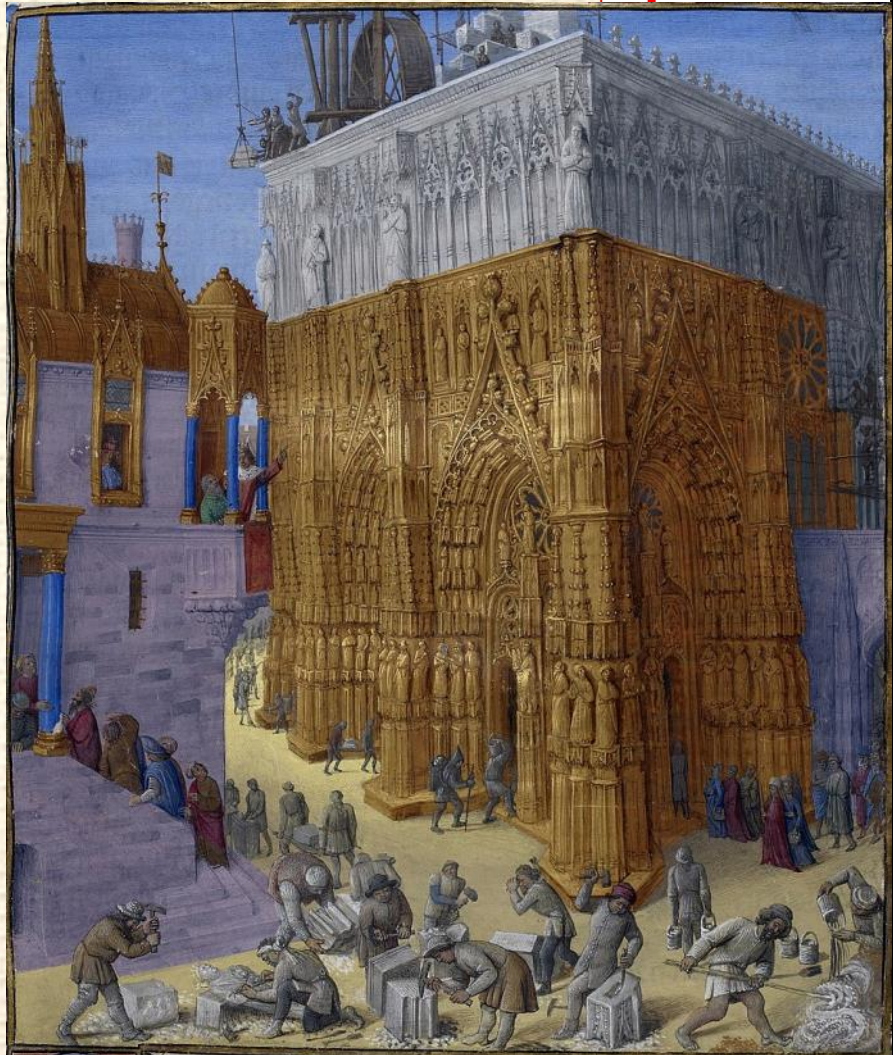
circa 1465, miniature from an illuminated manuscript of *Josephus's Antiquities of the Jews*,  
made for Jean, Duke of Berry ,

© Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

In Sunday's gospel, Jesus shares two parables: the parable of the builder and the parable of the king preparing for war. In both, we see men embarking on significant endeavors without taking the time to fully reflect on what they were about to undertake. Their actions were not matched by thoughtful consideration, and as a result, they were unable to complete their tasks.

Jesus seems to be teaching that following him and becoming his disciple requires not only action but also deep reflection. Before embarking on any path, we must take time to pause, or as the parables suggest, we must sit down and prayerfully reflect before moving forward. Discipleship is not a casual commitment, it requires preparation and time. Jesus also speaks of counting the cost, comparing discipleship to building a tower or going to war. Just as someone wouldn't begin either of these without careful planning, we must seriously reflect on what it takes to follow Jesus. Being his disciple isn't casual or easy; it demands sacrifice, dedication, and perseverance. But the reward is far greater than the cost, for in surrendering ourselves fully to Christ, we gain the fullness of life in him.

In our small illuminated miniature, circa 1465, we see a medieval construction scene in full swing, with craftsmen, grey with stone dust, hammering and chiseling masonry segments. A sculptor carefully carves a statue while others prepare mortar to join structural and decorative elements. On the left, citizens carrying financial contributions ascend the stairs of a palace, where a king, assisted by his architect, gestures towards heaven, overseeing the work and working out the costs of it all. The work is being done in praise of God. In the middle ground, the purpose of these efforts is revealed: both wealthy citizens and humble pilgrims, equipped with staffs and rucksacks, enter the richly adorned portals of a Gothic cathedral, still incomplete as towers remain unfinished. A crane on the roof lifts more building material. Gothic cathedrals, with their verticality, slenderness, and light-filled interiors, embody this aspiration to reach heaven. The unfinished state of Fouquet's structure reflects the ongoing nature of this spiritual journey, both in metaphor and reality. Tours Cathedral itself began construction in 1170 and wasn't completed until 1547.







# Israel - Walking in Jesus' Footsteps



## ✠ A Pilgrim Is . . . ✨

This Tuesday several of our parishioners are traveling to the Holy Land on a pilgrimage. So, what is a pilgrim?

- A pilgrim is not a tourist
- A pilgrim will leave behind business concerns
- A pilgrim will have an open mind
- A pilgrim does not travel alone
- A pilgrim respects the host country

A pilgrim is not a pious tourist. A pilgrim and a tourist may follow the same itinerary, but the pilgrim is on a sacred journey in which God is encountered through places, people and situations.

The tourist sees sights, discovers new places, learns interesting facts, takes photographs and accumulates souvenirs. The tourist returns home the same person as the one who left, save perhaps for a broadened mind.

The pilgrim gains insights and discerns new truths about oneself. The pilgrim travels with the expectation that the one who returns will not be the same person as the one who set out.

The pilgrim has his or her mind on ultimate things. He or she will not become a slave to a timetable or be distracted by gift shops. Time will be allowed for "holy idleness." The pilgrim sets out open to the possibility of having identity and faith challenged.

The outcome of the pilgrimage will be the transformation that has taken place inside the person. The pilgrim will return with an impression imprinted on the soul, rather than in the memory of a digital camera.

### A Pilgrim Will Leave Behind Business Concerns

The pilgrim's mindset is established prior to departure. Once the tasks of packing bags and checking lists have been completed, the pilgrim will purposefully leave behind family and business concerns in order to be open to God's presence throughout the pilgrimage.

A Jewish writer, Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman, offers a four-part formula for visiting a holy site in his book *Israel: A Spiritual Travel Guide* (Jewish Lights Publishing):

1. Beforehand, anticipate what you are going to see by reading about it.
2. As you get there, approach the site with all the expectation you can muster, as if it is the only spot on earth that matters.
3. When you arrive, acknowledge its sacred presence, taking some time to be alone with the site, yourself and God.
4. After you leave, record your afterthought about what you experienced.

In the words of the Rev. Peter J. Miano, founder of the Society for Biblical Studies, "Tourists pass through places, but pilgrims let places pass through them, allowing their hearts to be changed."



*A tourist imprints a digital image.*



*The happiest pilgrims are the most relaxed.*

*(Continued on page 15)*



*A pilgrim is not inhibited by ostentatious ornamentation.*

(Continued from page 14)

## A Pilgrim Is . . .

### A Pilgrim Will Have An Open Mind

The happiest pilgrims are the most relaxed. They don't expect everything to go smoothly. They don't get stressed over delays, itinerary changes or bad weather. They tolerate different people, customs and foods with an open mind.

The tourist may be hasty and impatient, mentally checking off sights on a to-do list. The pilgrim will be patient and considerate, remembering that the guide and tour leader are concerned for the welfare of the entire group.

The pilgrim will not be disconcerted to find that a treasured site is nothing like the picture in his or her mind. The pilgrim will not be inhibited by the ostentatious ornamentation of some holy places, but will focus on the meaning of the place.

The pilgrim will try not to be distracted when personal reflections are interrupted by another group's singing, a tour guide's commentary or tourists chatting.

### A Pilgrim Does Not Travel Alone

Whether in a group or not, the pilgrim does not travel alone. The pilgrim is open to encounters with others that build relationships. The tourist may find companionship, but the pilgrim experiences community.

The pilgrim prays for the success of the pilgrimage and for other members of the group. He or she makes an effort to accept other people's different spiritualities and others' need for quiet times.

Pilgrims are open to sharing their personal faith stories (though tactfully in sensitive Middle East situations) and to appreciating the faith of others.

The tourist sees religious buildings as objects of historical or architectural interest. The pilgrim sees them as shrines of a faith that lives on today.

The Christian pilgrim in the Holy Land is aware that the first Christians were simple fishermen and villagers scattered around modern-day Israel, Palestine, and Jordan. Descendants of early Christians live in these places, still following the Christian faith. These Christians are called the "Living Stones" of the Holy Land. Joining them in discussion and worship is an act of solidarity for today's pilgrim.

### A Pilgrim Respects the Host Country

The pilgrim treads lightly on sacred ground and on the planet. The tourist may unknowingly trample on holy ground or intrude noisily into sacred stillness. The pilgrim is sensitive and respectful.

The pilgrim does not waste water or electricity, conscious that these are precious resources in the Holy Land. The pilgrim disposes of rubbish appropriately, no matter how much litter lies around.

The pilgrim respects the host country and tries to learn about its culture - not just as a spectator at an evening "cultural performance." The pilgrim seeks to learn standard greetings in the local language.

The pilgrim learns tolerance towards persistent traders, accepting that they are just trying to make a living. The pilgrim accepts the presence of

beggars and the ubiquitous expectation of tips, realizing that pay rates are low.

The pilgrim may even ponder an 11th-century preacher's injunction to European pilgrims: "The pilgrim may bring with him no money at all, except perhaps to distribute it to the poor on the road . . ."



**A pilgrim does not travel alone.**



*Israel is a mix of cultures and religions.*



## † The Wisest and the Best Thing

Our Savior's advice to those who wished to be his disciples was "Count the cost." He did not wish to entice any man to enlist in his army by keeping him in ignorance as to the requirements of his service. Again and again he tested professed converts himself, and he frequently exhorted men to try themselves, lest they should begin a profession and be unable to maintain it. True religion is a matter of enthusiasm, but at the same time its truths and precepts can endure the severest examination. The exercise of our judgments upon the



gospel is invited, yea required. It is true that many persons are brought to Christ in earnest assemblies, where they are addressed in fervent language; but yet a man may sit down in his study or his counting house with his pen in his hand, and in the coolest possible manner he may calculate, and, if under the Holy Spirit's guidance he shall be led to calculate truthfully, he will come to the conclusion that the cause of the Lord Jesus is worthiest and best.

Do not imagine, as some do, that religion consists in a wild fanaticism which never considers, calculates, judges, estimates, or ponders; for such an imagination will be the reverse of truth. Ardour, fervor, enthusiasm, these are desirable, and we cannot well have too much of them; but at the same time, as I have already said, we can justify our attachment to Christ by the

calmest logic, by the most patient consideration. We may make a lengthy and deliberate estimate, taking both things temporal and things eternal into review, and yet we may challenge all gainsayers while we declare that it is the wisest and the best thing in all the world to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

*From a sermon by Charles Haddon Spurgeon entitled "All The People At Work For Jesus," delivered June 3, 1877. Photo by Josh Appel on Unsplash.*

## † Onesimus



Paul spent much of his ministry in the Roman province of Asia—now known as Turkey. He made a number of converts in Colossae, a city about 80 miles east of Ephesus. Among these was the family of Philemon, a wealthy slave owner. One of the slaves, Onesimus, whose name means "useful", followed Paul after the apostle left. Runaway slaves could be killed with impunity. Paul wrote a short note to Philemon to plead on behalf of Onesimus. Apparently he was successful, because in the 20th century a plaque was found near Colossae. It was a tribute to someone named "Philemon from his beloved Onesimus." A coincidence?!

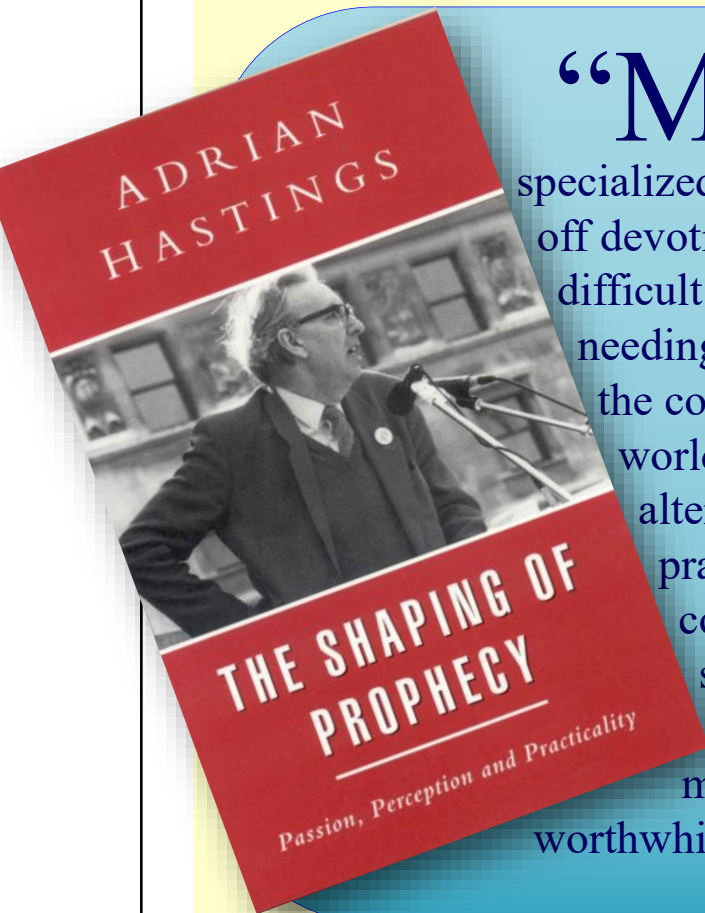
How believers handle their money is inextricably related to the depth of their worship. Whether we put money in the offering plate or not, weekly worship should remind us of our continual stewardship of the possessions the Lord has entrusted to us. If we do not give properly we cannot worship properly. - John MacArthur





† Thought for Reflection

- from Fr. John Morrison



“My spiritual life is not something specialized and intense; a fenced-off devotional patch rather difficult to cultivate, and needing to be sheltered from the cold winds of the outer world. Nor is it an alternative to my outward, practical life. On the contrary, it is the very source of that quality and purpose which makes my practical life worthwhile.

Adrian Hastings, *The Shaping of Prophecy*, pp. 19-20

**Phishing Scams - Don't fall for them!** Please do not respond to any message from Fr. Nate or St. Paul's by email or any other method of communication that asks you to purchase something (often a gift card) or asks for a "favor." **Delete these messages, do not reply, do not click links in the messages, mark them as Spam or Junk.** If there is any doubt about the veracity of a text or email, contact Fr. Nate by e-mail at ([priest@saintpaulsbrookfield.com](mailto:priest@saintpaulsbrookfield.com)) or the office ([dszen@yahoo.com](mailto:dszen@yahoo.com)).





## ✝ Helping Our Neighbors

Here is an update about St. Paul's ongoing food-related ministries serving our community:

**Drive Thru Food Collection** - occurs every other Wednesday from 11 am - noon. We have now held 141 food drives since April 22, 2020! Last time we delivered food to the St. James' Daily Bread Food Pantry, Danbury & their Food Pantry and the Jericho Partnership in Danbury.

Our next food collection, will be Wednesday, September 17th and will support the St. James' Daily Bread Food Pantry, Danbury, and the Jericho Food Pantry in Danbury.

Thank you all for your ongoing generosity and to the many volunteers who have helped to load the vehicles and deliver food to the pantries.

# Next Drive-Thru Food Collection Wednesday September 17th



*Help us,  
Help others!*

**11 am to Noon**

If you would like to request Altar flowers for a particular Sunday in Memory of a friend or loved one, please fill out the flower chart or envelope located in the back of the church or send an email request to [dszen@yahoo.com](mailto:dszen@yahoo.com) or contact David Szen.







## ANDY GULLAHORN & JILL PHILLIPS

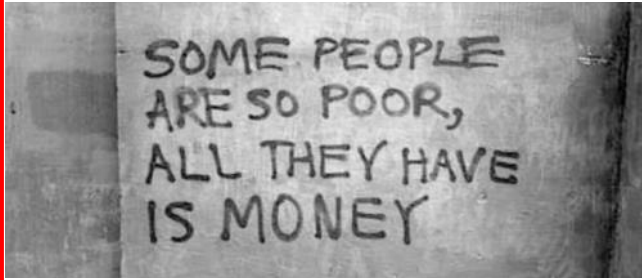
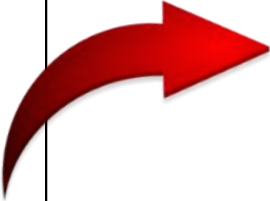
Fri., Sept. 12, 2025 | 7:30 P.M.

Tickets \$30

[www.communitycoffeehouse.org](http://www.communitycoffeehouse.org)



Community Coffeehouse | 7 Madison Ave. | Danbury, CT 06810 | (203) 748-4972



SOME PEOPLE  
ARE SO POOR,  
ALL THEY HAVE  
IS MONEY

**J**esus seems to talk about possessions a great deal. To be his disciple requires saying good-bye to everything which we think belongs to us.

### **Mozart's Greatest Serenade: The Gran Partita**

Mozart's Serenade No. 10 in B-flat major stands as one of the most remarkable works in the wind ensemble repertoire. Commonly known as the Gran Partita - the famous third movement Adagio - perhaps best known from its poignant use in the film Amadeus - is a profound example of Mozart's lyrical genius.

Our organist Kirsten Peterson is a member of the Waterbury Symphony and will be part of this performance. Click [HERE](#) for ticket info.



*Mozart*  
*Gran Partita*

**Sunday  
Sept 14th  
at 4pm**

Litchfield  
Community Center



## † Wednesday Morning Healing Service

Our mid-week Wednesday morning 10 am Holy Eucharist with healing prayer, now has about 50 worshippers weekly.. With live music and a brief homily, this service is just what you need to sustain you through the week. Come join us and check it out or watch on YouTube Live.

### Greeters Needed

Greeting people in a warm way makes them feel good about their presence in church.

At St. Paul's, we are always looking for people who feel called to serve in this important ministry.

If you are interested in becoming a greeter, please contact Pam Szen ([prszzen@gmail.com](mailto:prszzen@gmail.com)) or David Szen.

## MOVE

To a new spirit of gratitude.

GIVE to your  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

THE Episcopal CHURCH

## A THIRD OF US

† Praying for the 1/3 of our world that are still unreached with the Gospel.

### Paraiyan

Country: India | Population: 2,473,000 | Language: Tamil | Main Religion: Hinduism | Evangelical: Unknown

The Paraiyan of India primarily work in agriculture growing crops, and raising animals on land typically owned by people in higher castes. The Paraiyan are outcasts of Indian society and are outside of the Indian caste system. Although they are Hindu, they are not vegetarians and will eat both beef and pork, along with other meats. They believe that by performing rituals and offering prayers, food, and incense to their gods, they might escape the endless cycle of birth, death, and reincarnation. Paraiyan is a Tamil word meaning drums, and they are well-known for playing drums at weddings and other occasions. Literacy is a challenge for the Paraiyan, as many abandon school to help provide for their families. Less than half are able to read and write. Praise God that the Gospel is currently available in both written and audio form in the Tamil language. Pray that the Paraiyan would come to know Jesus and realize how much they are loved and accepted by Him.

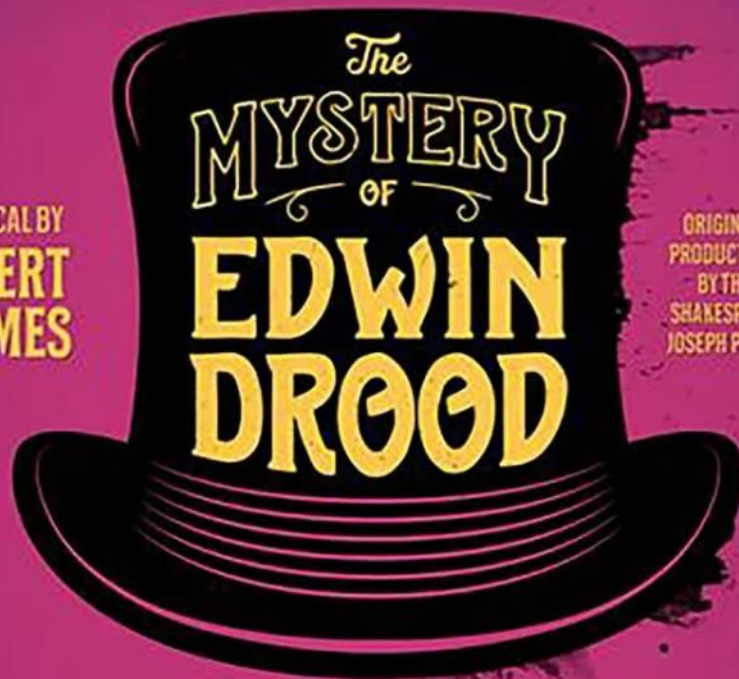




**Crystal Theatre**  
norwalk, connecticut | est. 1987

**Director Mat Young**  
**Choreographer Kelly Nayden**  
**Musical Director Matt Stolfi**

A MUSICAL BY  
**RUPERT HOLMES**



ORIGINAL BROADWAY  
PRODUCTION PRODUCED  
BY THE NEW YORK  
SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL  
JOSEPH PAPP, PRODUCER

**tix**  
**\$25 Adults**  
**\$15 Students**  
**Seniors**

**Sept. 12th, 13th, 18th,**  
**19th & 20th**  
**7:30pm**  
**Matinee 14th & 21st**  
**2pm**

*Featuring St. Paul's own  
Timothy Huber!*



**CAST** Timothy Huber, Nancy L. Meyer,  
Rhianna Ring-Howell, Michael Stanfield, Sara LaBella,  
Elias Levy, Gillian Eckert, Kelly Nayden, Jonathan Hall,  
Brooke McHugh, Samantha Strack, Zoe Guaman,  
Ben Medina, Grady Dennis, James Ring-Howell

**Tix available at**  
**crystaltheatre.org**

**Crystal Theatre, 66 Bayview Ave, Norwalk, Ct 06850**



THE  
*Episcopal*  
CHURCH



**September 7, 2025 – Pentecost 13 (C)**  
**United Thank Offering Grants**

The United Thank Offering Board is delighted to announce the opening of applications for its 2026 annual grants, seeking projects that focus on justice through bridging divides. The deadline to apply is **5 p.m. ET Jan. 9 for Anglican Communion** partners and **5 p.m. ET Jan. 30 for Episcopal Church** applicants.

Applications received by the posted deadlines will go through a review process to ensure all criteria are met before a final submission in February. In addition, draft applications can be emailed to the Rev. Heather Melton ([hmelton@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:hmelton@episcopalchurch.org)) for feedback and support.

Find application materials and support videos online in English and Spanish at <https://unitedthankoffering.com/apply/>. Applicants are invited to register for one-on-one support during open office hours this fall with United Thank Offering staff.

The focus of grants for the 2026-2028 triennium is inspired by sources from the “three-legged stool” of Anglicanism: Scripture, tradition, and reason. In 2026, the grant focus is inspired by a C.S. Lewis quote and Amos 5:24: “But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” Applications must demonstrate how two disconnected groups will collaborate on a project that works toward meaningful change within a local community.



“Members of the UTO Grants Committee are keenly feeling the ways in which the United States continues to grow increasingly fractured socially, politically, and financially,” writes the Rev. Rowan Larson, vice president for grants for the United Thank Offering. “As we see similar divides deepening in countries across the world, we believe this is a global issue that affects us all. We are hopeful that this year’s grant focus will inspire innovative ministry projects to bridge some of these divides and move communities toward justice for all.”

During the last three-year grant cycle, United Thank Offering grants supported nearly 70 innovative mission and ministry projects focused on areas of ministry based on Matthew 25:31-46, including the worldwide incarceration crisis, welcoming “the stranger,” and water-related issues.



## **Saint Paul's Parish Chronic Pain Support Group**

Compassion • Hope • Fellowship

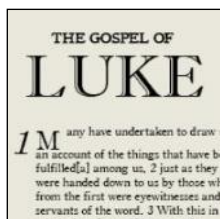
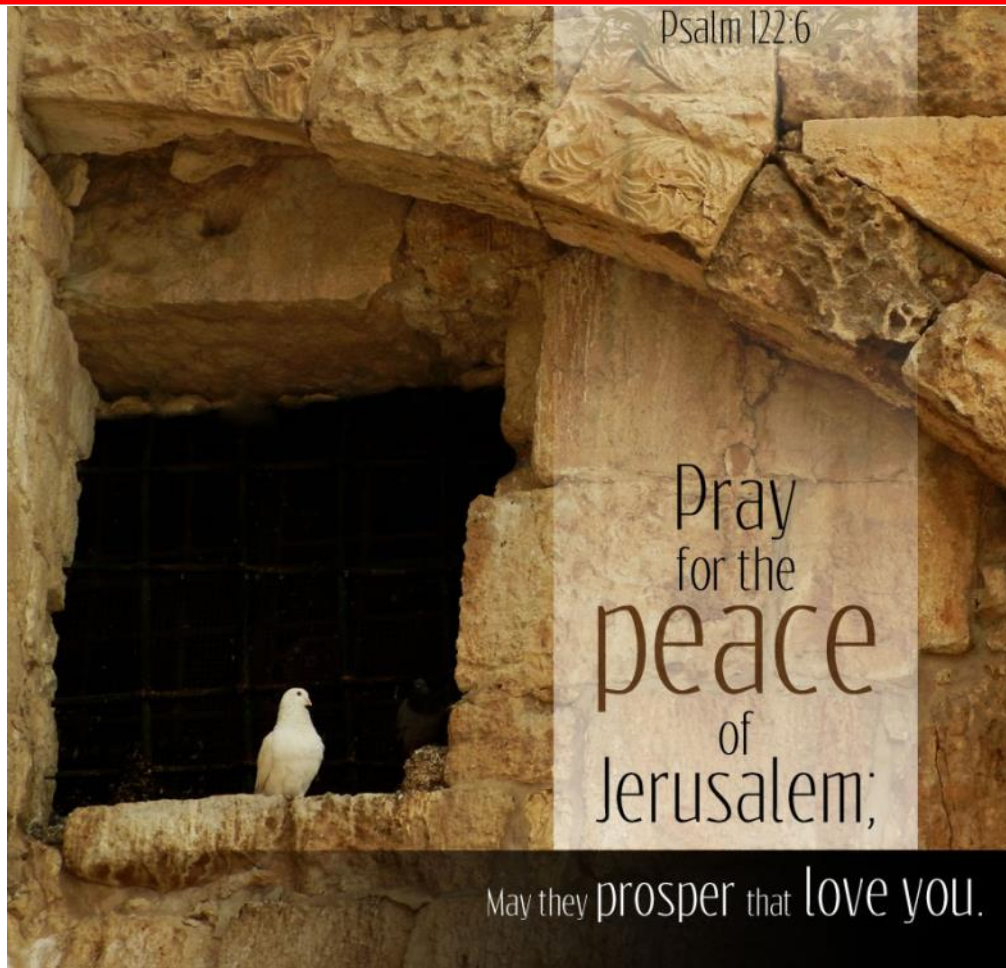
Living with chronic physical pain can feel isolating and overwhelming, but you don't have to face it alone. Join others who understand what you're going through in a safe, supportive, and faith-centered environment. Our monthly, peer-led support group provides a welcoming space to connect, share experiences, and support one another.

**Next Meeting**  
**Thursday, September 4th • 11:30am**  
The Guild Room • St Paul's Parish  
174 Whisconier Rd. Brookfield, CT  
**\*Meets on the 1st Thursday of every month**

Contact - [chronicpain@saintpaulsbrookfield.com](mailto:chronicpain@saintpaulsbrookfield.com)

**\*Pre-registration Required**





**O**ur Men meet weekly to study on Monday nights. They are currently dissecting the Gospel of Luke. Join them each Monday night at 7 pm in Crocker Hall. All the studies are available live on YouTube.

### † **Ladies Wed Evening Bible Study**

**A**ll women are invited to join the Ladies Wednesday Evening Bible Study for our new study of the book of Ephesians. Every Wednesday evening, 7-8 pm by Zoom.

This letter includes many praises and prayers to God for his saving love and gifts to the church. We look forward to studying and sharing our questions and experiences together. Please join us as we receive God's Word (3:17) "that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love."



**Report on the Discipleship program implemented in Rwanda's Correctional facilities over a period of June – July 2025. Bible study materials distribution.**

Good News Rwanda has been doing ministry to incarcerated people over the last 18 years with the goal of disrupting the cycle of darkness and despair by advancing the gospel of Jesus Christ. We want to take the light of the word of God into dark places to instill hope in people affected by incarceration.

Prisons can be places of darkness, where despair festers and grows. Hopelessness spreads as prisoners spend unproductive years behind bars, and many return to society only to fall right back into their old, detrimental lifestyle. Void of self-worth, abandoned by their families, and trapped by their pasts, some prisoners feel they have nothing to live for anymore.

If we want prisons to become places of rehabilitation that release restored people back into the community, then something – or someone – must break through the darkness to turn brokenness into hopefulness.

We are grateful to the LORD that over the last two months, we have trained 192 Bible study facilitators within four prison facilities (Gicumbi 48, Musanze 44, Nyarugenge 50, and Rubavu 50). These facilitators have formed 170 Bible study groups with about 2,550 members who will be coming together every week to study the word of God in the above-mentioned four prison facilities.

Among the groups who are being trained in prison facilities they are three Muslims (2 men and 1 woman) who were given Bibles and guidebooks for Bible study, and we hope that the Holy Spirit will use the word of God to convince them that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Savior of their lives.

With the support from the St Paul's Church – Connecticut, USA, we are thrilled to report that we have been able to distribute 148 Bibles and 148 guidebooks for Bible study. After training Bible study facilitators we gave them tools to use while facilitating small groups for Bible study, and engaged them in forming Bible study groups in their respective prison facilities.



*Training sessions in progress for Bible Study Facilitators in Gicumbi, Nyarugenge, and Rubavu prison facilities.*

*Continues on next page*



## Good News Rwanda

Rev. Agnes Kamashara with other team members from our prison ministry have been doing tremendous work in training facilitators for small groups Bible study, encouraging them to establish small groups for Bible study and start using the material that have been given to them to facilitate the studying of the Word of God. They meet every week and some groups meet twice a week to study the Bible and share the Word of God with unbelievers. Over the last two months, the Bible study group members have led 30 people to a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ. We believe they are more effective than the outsiders are because they know those who need the gospel, they are able to reach to places where we can't go, and they understand the situation more than anybody else.

We believe that this discipleship program will make a big difference in the lives of believers and will disrupt the spiritual emptiness and bring light into dark places, and help many people affected by crime and incarceration come out of darkness and despair to become agents of change in communities. We request them to write testimonies about how God changed their lives and allow us to share their stories to encourage others and amplify the works of God among His people. We also minister to correctional staff and some of them have asked us to give them Bibles. We believe that one day they will come to believe in Jesus Christ our Lord and savior.



Here are some testimonies:

### **Changed life story of Gisele Umbwiyenza**

I lost my both parents when I was still young and this made my life so difficult. When I became a teenager, I was impregnated by someone who later denied the pregnancy to be his! Life became more difficult until I committed a crime and found myself in a prison Facility. My heart broke down, became hopeless, stressed, hateful, and anxious. My relatives don't come to visit me nor even talk to me, I was just in total darkness and despair. I still have years to serve in prison, but I am so thankful to God for the CBS program; when my fellow inmates recruited me to join the Bible Study group, I didn't know God wanted to use that to bring me out of darkness, despair, and hopelessness! I praise God that my Bible study group has become my spiritual family, and studying the word of God has been a pathway for me to meet Jesus Christ and get to know Him better. I gave Him my life, I have learned to pray to Him every day, to believe in His word and to share His word with others. Jesus Christ is my parent, my friend, my savior, and my provider. I feel like I am no longer lonely, desperate, and hopeless because His holy word gives me joy, hope and peace.

*Continues on next page*

## Good News Rwanda

### **Changed life – Mr. Mike Hafashimana:**

I lived a sinful life my entire youth life and goal was to chase money until I become a rich man in our area. I did not know the Lord Jesus Christ, I could not go to church to pray and whenever I saw born again Christians, I called them crazy people. I could walk with smallest bags of marijuana drugs in my shoes, and I thought I was smarter than others when I was using drugs and nobody knew about that! One day I consumed the drugs made me commit a crime, and I was arrested and ended up here in prison. I thought it was finished with me, I was stressed and traumatized due to being separated from my family and my community, and I started living a life of remorse. I felt like nothing could make happy again, and I was wondering if there was any powerful person or thing that could get me out of the prison. I lived a very miserable life in a prison facility, until my fellow inmates invited me to join their small group for Bible study and promised me to pray for my situation to change. I couldn't believe it, but I did it anyway.

My life was changed when I joined a Bible study group in our facility, I heard the word of God, believed in the word, and decided to give my life to the Lord Jesus Christ. Studying the Word of God has been absolutely life-changing to me, and I can read the Bible every day, enjoy discussing the word of God with my fellow inmates, and the Lord Jesus Christ has rehabilitated me from stress, trauma, anger, and bitterness. He has set me free from all my sins including taking drugs and alcohol abuse. The Bible study group has been very helpful to me, and I am determined to go forward in the Christian journey, and share with other about what Jesus has done in my life. I am so grateful for the Bible study program.

### **Financial part of the report**

The following are the details on how the funds (\$1,186) we received from the St Paul's Church were used to equip Bible study groups' facilitators with Bibles and guidebooks. All the Bibles were purchased from the Bible Society of Rwanda, while the guidebooks were purchased from Community Bible Study programs.

- Purchase 148 Bibles = \$962
- Purchase 148 guidebooks = \$177
- Transport fees to prisons = \$87
- Bank charges = \$14
- Total expenses = \$1,240

### **Challenge:**

The biggest challenge that we are going to face is to ask people to engage in Bible study when they don't have access to the Bible! It's like asking people to eat when no food is put on the table. In the next three months, we need at least 850 Bibles and 850 Guidebooks to distribute to 170 Bible study groups; that means at least 5 Bibles and 5 guidebooks for each group of 15-20 members. We are praying for the Lord to provide, and we appreciate anybody that God can use to make this prayer answered.

### **Opportunity:**

As the Bible study groups function, they will mature and give birth to more groups in such a way that within a period of 12 months, we hope to have about over 400 groups that are functional in 5 prison facility, with about 7,000 members who study the Word of God and try to share it with others. We will be organizing evangelistic events in each prison facility to preach the gospel to thousands of unbelievers and

*Continues on next page*



## Good News Rwanda

hopefully lead many to a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ. The Bible study group members will also do one-on-one evangelism to win more souls for Christ, we will make sure that all new converts are disciplined and nurtured to grow spiritually.

### Conclusion:

Evangelism and discipleship can significantly affect prison rehabilitation by providing spiritual guidance, promoting positive behavioral changes, and fostering a sense of meaning and purpose. These approaches can help inmates find hope, forgiveness, and a new identity, leading to a reduced likelihood of recidivism and successful reintegration into society.

The urgency of discipleship grows, as believers understand the heavy damage the church is suffering from, which is the Lack of God's truths into His people. Jesus commanded believers to make disciples. The preaching of the gospel is a call to all believers by God to carry out the great mandate given to everyone by Jesus Christ as in the book of Matthew 28:19-22. Evangelism brings about growth, but there is no true growth that does not result in evangelism and discipleship.

We praise God for the discipleship program that we're carrying out helping inmates study the word of God so that they can grow spiritually, and be equipped for the work of ministry. We thank the donor who is helping us get the tools that we need to implement this program. We hope for the scaling up of the program, reaching more people and making more impact in the lives of people.

Done at Kigali, July 27, 2025

Agnes Kamashara  
CBS Coordinator

Approved by Pius Nyakayiro  
The Director – Good News Rwanda.



“Lord, you have searched me out and known me; you know my sitting down and my rising up; you discern my thoughts from afar.” Even for those (or perhaps, especially for those) trying to be faithful stewards, God’s discerning our thoughts from afar has to give us pause. How can we possibly keep our minds thinking and acting in the way God would have us respond to life? How are you doing with prayer, study, service to others, giving, and being faithful in community worship and activity.





# **JOURNEY TO FREEDOM**

## **HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN CONNECTICUT**

### **GREATER HARTFORD REGIONAL CONFERENCE**

***Bringing together 100+ churches and organizations***

**27** | **September**  
2025

8:15-9:15 am - Registration  
& Breakfast

9:15 am- 12 pm - Conference

Location:

**South  
Church**



277 Main St., Hartford

#### **HUMAN TRAFFICKING 101**

Learn how to  
recognize trafficking  
in CT

#### **PANEL DISCUSSION** with survivors and advocates

A survivor's journey  
from grooming to  
thriving

#### **WHAT'S MY ROLE?**

The critical role of  
church and  
community

**To Register**  
**Scan here** →

**Or Click Here**



For more information:  
[contact@theundergroundne.org](mailto:contact@theundergroundne.org)



**† St. Paul's Mission Committee**  
**Annual Request for Budget Line Items for Year 2026**

*"If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and if one of you says to them, go in peace, be warmed and be filled, and yet do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself." James 2:15-17*

**S**aint Paul's Mission Committee serves the entire parish as a focal point for our mission work. We prepare an annual budget for Vestry approval. Items in this budget come from you, our parishioners! This is your opportunity to enhance your personal or family missions with the prayer, talents, and financial support of the entire parish!

As a sponsor of your Christian based organization, you are annually asked to complete the form at the end of this article. Additionally, you are expected to submit a "Sword Points" article. This is your opportunity to "put a face" on what we, as a Parish, are supporting.

We invite your active participation in this budgeting process as well as your involvement with St. Paul's Mission Committee. We meet first Thursday, monthly 7:00 in the Guild Room.

If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact a member of the Mission Committee: George Blass, Angela Haselwood, Lois Hunt, Joyce Sarver, Bill Schrull, Ron Switzer, Pam Szen, Bonnie Wanzer, or Don Winkley.



Mission Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Persons requesting prayer, physical or financial support \_\_\_\_\_

Our task is to sponsor those missions that are:

- ***Christ Centered***
- ***Meet the basic needs of our neighbors***
- ***Have a strong base of existing personal support by the individual making this submission.***

Briefly describe the purpose or scope of the mission or organization:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is it Christian based, to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

To what extent do you recommend St Paul's should offer support?

Prayer Needs: \_\_\_\_\_

Financial Support: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Assistance: \_\_\_\_\_

Any other pertinent information for committee consideration.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Kindly return this form to the Mission Committee by September 28, 2025.***

# Save the Date

## Oktoberfest

Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup> 4-7 pm



- Join us for a Parish wide celebration
- When: Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup> 4pm-7pm
- Where: In Crocker Hall
- What: Traditional Oktoberfest fare
- Who: Our Parish Family & Friends
- How: Main course will be provided
- Kindly bring a side dish or dessert to share (no alcohol please).
- If you would like to help, please see Mary Thomas or Pam Szen.



## ✠ Hearts to Hands Reminder

At the adult education class, we talked about how much we are all like family, caring for one another, reflecting the image of Christ and many of you who "behind the scenes" are doing this organically as you become aware of a need.

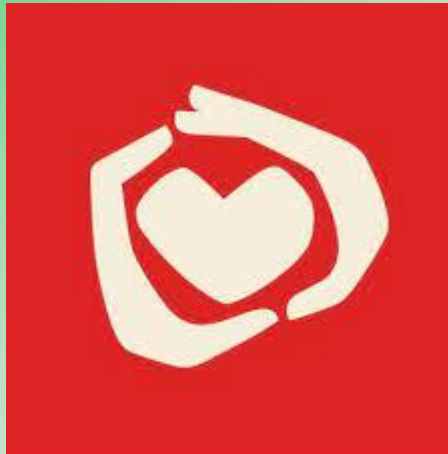
I wanted to remind others who are uncomfortable, shy or don't normally seek out help that we are here for you as well. The Hearts to Hands ministry can help with arranging transportation to appointments, doing a specific task around your home, providing meals after surgical procedures for you or loved ones during difficult times, and the list continues. This assistance is provided by fellow parishioners and some who we seek to help that may be skilled with your particular need.

Please be comfortable to reach out to any one of us in this ministry: Bill & Lin Bennett or Dot Crocker. Your information / request will be kept as confidential as possible, yet sharing just enough to get you the help you need. The best way to reach out is via email:

Dot Crocker: [Dotsy12@charter.net](mailto:Dotsy12@charter.net)

Linda Bennett: [toocoolforgrandma@gmail.com](mailto:toocoolforgrandma@gmail.com)

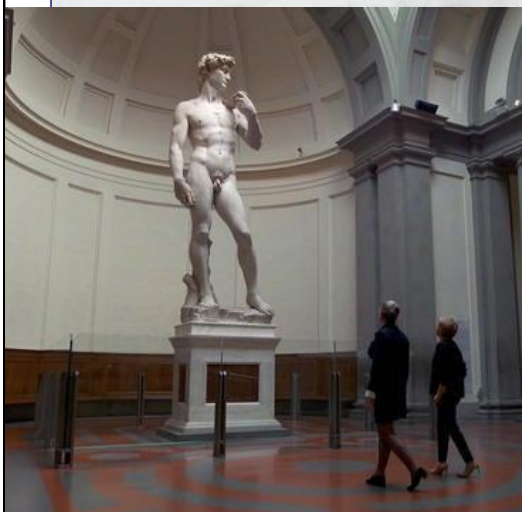
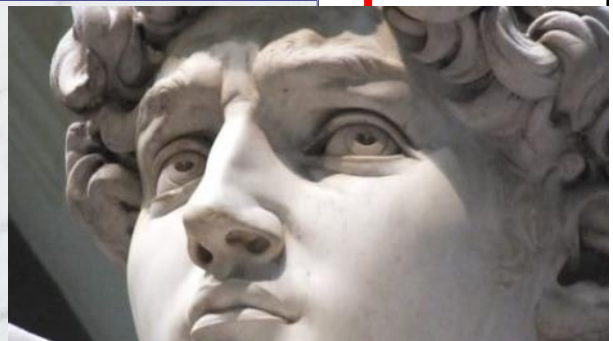
Bill Bennett: [ourhousephotos@yahoo.com](mailto:ourhousephotos@yahoo.com)



## ✠ This Day in 1504

September 8 is the day in 1504 that Michelangelo unveiled his astonishing sculpture, David. Some four decades earlier, a colossal, misshapen block of marble - more than 19 feet high - was imperfectly quarried and then delivered to the sculptor Agostino di Duccio, along with the commission to create a biblical figure for one of the buttresses of a Florence cathedral. The block was unwieldy, and Duccio gave up after a rough attempt at carving some feet and legs; the commission then passed on to Antonio Rossellino, who also conceded defeat.

The abandoned slab lay in a field in Florence for thirty



years; locals dubbed it "the Giant." When church authorities revived the project in 1501, the commission went to the young, ambitious Michelangelo - who promptly built a shed around the Giant, and got to work. When the sculpture was at last unveiled for public viewing, it must have seemed like a miracle: the dirty, twisted Giant had become an elegant, beautiful man, the ancient Shepherd King of Israel. Michelangelo didn't battle the block's imperfect dimensions, but rather used them to create the figure's signature pose.

Michelangelo later said, "Every block of stone has a statue inside it, and it is the task of the sculptor to discover it." And again: "I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free."

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**M**aureen Costello & Rachel Chaleski celebrate today. Arthur Galdino opens presents tomorrow. Mary Thomas & Paula Pascoa blow out candles on Monday. Cigdem Usekes & Rev. Will McLaughlin are a year older & wiser on Tuesday. Looking ahead we'll celebrate Ken Kast (12th), Michele Janofsky & Pat Sciallo (13), Amy Boyce, Bruce Simon & Bishop David Kodia (14th), Bob Cutting (17th), Lisa Marsico, Katie & Sarah Szen (22nd), and Ed Siergiej (24th). Have a blessed day everyone!



RFBW

*Presents*

## COFFEE WITH JESUS

**In All Your Ways**



*I can do this.  
I can do this.  
I can do this.*

I can DO this, Jesus!



You can, James.

I think I hear Faith kicking in.



It's a small thing, I know, Jesus. Forgive me if I'm making a mountain out of a molehill.



Your faith in the little things makes the bigger things possible, buddy.

©Radio Free Babylon® All rights reserved. The title reference tells you where one inspiration for this came from (Proverbs 3:6). Another was Mark 9:23 - "All things are possible..." A third was "I can do all things..." (Phil 4:13. Each one has the word "all" in it.) James's situation is intentionally vague. Could be an exam, an interview, or just getting to work without having to pull over for an anxiety attack. You can do this. Through Christ. Everything is possible. In all your ways acknowledge him.



## † This Sunday's Readings

(Click on the red links for the readings)

### Counting the Cost

[Jeremiah 18:1-11](#)

In our Hebrew scripture lesson the prophet puts forth an allegory for God's dealings with Jerusalem and Judah: it is like the hands of a potter working clay. Just as the potter may be working with a ruined piece of clay running on a wheel, so the potter may transform the clay into a thing of grace and beauty. The Lord is the potter, and the house of Israel the clay. Should the people amend their ways, it is within God's power to bring about a restoration and to shape them once more into a worthy vessel.

[Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17](#)

With marvelous wisdom God alone perceives the heights and depths of life.

[Philemon 1-21](#)

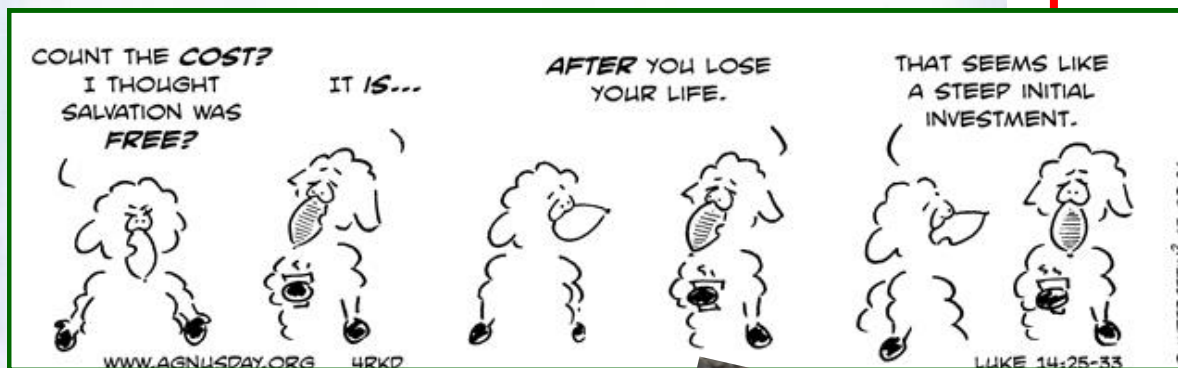
This reading contains most of the letter that Paul sent to Philemon asking that he receive back in love the runaway slave Onesimus, who was voluntarily returning to him. Other information indicates that Philemon and Onesimus came from the community of the Colossians. Paul himself is now in prison, perhaps in Rome. Onesimus means "the useful one," and Paul describes him as a man who has now become very useful. Evidently he had recently been converted to Christ. Paul does not speak against the institution of slavery, but tells Philemon that his relationship with Onesimus is changed now that they are brothers in Christ.

[Luke 14:25-33](#)

In our gospel Jesus speaks of the necessity of counting the full cost of discipleship. To follow Jesus in the way of the cross means to surrender the whole of one's life. Any relationship which interferes with this primary commitment must be hated. Jesus tells the crowds two stories to make them consider carefully whether they are ready and able to follow him completely.

**Luke 14:25-33**

So at a minimum these sayings of Jesus ought to draw us up short. Cause us to reflect how much the choices we have already made are costing us - and our planet; and to consider whether the costs of following Jesus might be a better investment.



### † Sermon Shorts

“Our One Foundation.” To replay all our sermons, audio and videos follow this link for the [Sunday Sermons](#). Check out our [Sermon Archives](#) as well.



## † Your Prayers Are Requested For...

*It is such an intimate time when praying for the health and well being of others and such a privilege We do not know the wisdom of God nor what the Lord intends. But we do know Gods mercy. So we confidently gather our needs and present them to god, the Father as we pray for...*

.....Ed Licence, Gail Winkley, and other parishioners convalescing in extended care facilities.

.....Trinity, Southport; Grace Church, Stafford Springs; Iglesia Betania, Stamford; L'Eglise de L'Epiphanie, Stamford; St. Andrews, Stamford, St. Francis, Stamford.

.....Revival at St. Paul's and the greater Danbury area.

.....Those involved in the ministry of Christian Formation in parishes. For Church school & youth directors, teachers & mentors. For adult education leaders.

.....For the Peace of Jerusalem. - *Psalm 122:6*

.....Clayton Ferry, Barbara Hock, Jim Megura, Peter Scalzo, Sr., Peter Scalzo, Jr., Doris, Karen, Beverly Hall, Roger, Cynthia, Valerie, Heidi Pinheiro, Dale Mitchell, Ruth, Blake, Nick Marcalus, Cliff, Evelyn Kirner, Jane Sedor, Jim Beck, Larry Wanzer, George, Bob Finn, Mike, Paul Kovacs, Barbara Stowell, Susan Morrison, Lois Hunt, Alex, Walter, Elana and Veronika continued healing.

.....the people of [Ukraine](#); the people of the [Kingdom of Tonga](#); the people of [The Gambia](#); the bishop, clergy and laity of the Diocese of Oke-Osun - The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion); and our sister and brother members of the [Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church](#).

.....For the Church: that we may strive to open our hearts to God each day and be vigilant against allowing anyone or anything to displace God as the center of our life.

.....[St. James' Episcopal Church](#), Danbury and their [Daily Bread Food Pantry](#), which is the recipient of our food basket collections during the month of September.

.....Our missionaries, Will & Becky McLaughlin and their family, and their ministry in Cambodia; and for all missionaries: that God will inspire the message that they offer, help them to recognize how they can best serve their communities, and sustain them in times of loneliness.

.....For all who are suffering for their discipleship or who are imprisoned or persecuted for their faith: that God will heal their pain, strengthen their spirit, and make strong and effective their witness to Christ.

.....[St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Danbury](#), a church partner of the Jericho Partnership.

.....[For Recovery from Sickness](#).

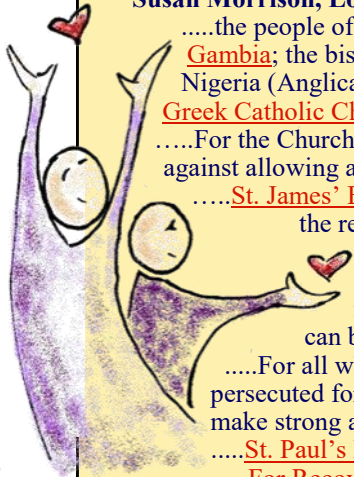
.....That we may come to recognize that everything we have is a gift from God and we are called to generously share all our gifts.

.....For the one third of humanity that does not have access to the gospel, for zealous preachers of the word, that by the Holy Spirit, that they would become strong in their faith, grow in numbers and be a light to those around them.

.....For all who have no food: that God will touch the hearts of those with abundance to share their bounty so that all may experience the reign of God.

.....For the at risk in human trafficking, that they would be seen, supported and able to see the truth of their belovedness, that they may walk in it.

.....[Peace Among the Nations](#).



### "Counting the Cost"

"For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? "





# Just For the Joy of It!

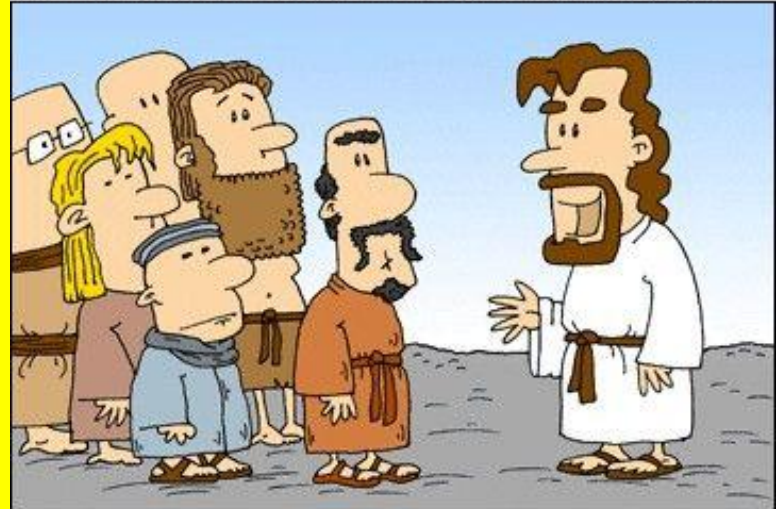
(And Christian Fellowship)



Did You Know ..... that one of the blue stripes on the [flag of El Salvador](#) (pictured) represents the Atlantic Ocean, despite the country not having a coastline on it?



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Ecclesiasticus 43:27 - We could say more but could never say enough; let the final word be: 'He is the all.' - 30 -