



The disciples asked, 'Then who can be saved?!' But Jesus looked at them and said, 'For mortals it is impossible, but for God all things are possible.'

- Matthew 19:25-26

# The Messenger

Early Winter 2025

## Stewardship

It's the season! The season of stewardship campaigns that end in pledge drives. There are three reasons for the church doing these: one, it's to help you think about your faithful generosity; two, it's to remind you why St. Paul's is worth investing in; and three, it's to help the leadership do a little budget forecasting for the church.

Sometimes though, I wonder if this connection between stewardship and a pledge drive messes with our understanding of stewardship. I mean, what do you think stewardship means? I think a lot of people might answer it's about being generous with our resources, or something to that effect. Yes, indeed, that is true. And it's more than that, too!

Stewardship is basically discipleship. As a beloved mentor used to say, "Stewardship is everything after saying yes to following Jesus." It is about applying our faith to how we take care of everything we've been given. As in everything – from how we manage our money, to how we care for the planet, to how we use the time given to us, to how we apply our gifts and talents.

There are Christian practices and principles for all of this. Because Christianity (as much as we tend to focus on what it means for our salvation or eternal life) is actually

more about how we live now. Jesus didn't spend much time talking about eternity, and when he did, it was mostly to illustrate what is important for us to focus on with our lives. Like in Matthew, where Jesus talks about the day of judgement, he suggests that people will be separated by how they treated the least of these — the poor, the stranger, the outcast, the widow, the one in prison, the orphan – which really, doesn't say anything about eternity. It says everything about today.

So, what are the principles of Christian stewardship?

The first principle of Christian stewardship is God's "ownership." Everything we have, everything we've been given, all that there is, is a gift from God and belongs to God. We are only caretakers of these things. This is a good principle (and one that extends far beyond Christianity). It reminds us that nothing we have permanently belongs to us. Other voices and traditions remind us that we are caretakers of this world to pass on to future generations. We have a responsibility to care for it well.

(continued page 3)

### Child Care Center

Medina Telesco, Director

M-F 7:30am – 5:30pm

Children 6 weeks to 5 years

[childcaredir@stpaulsryebrook.com](mailto:childcaredir@stpaulsryebrook.com)

(914) 939-3079

Pastor Jim O'Hanlon

[johanlon.stpauls@gmail.com](mailto:johanlon.stpauls@gmail.com) (917) 803-3974

Donna Smith, Secretary (914) 939-8170

[spelch@msn.com](mailto:spelch@msn.com)

## Our Child Care Center



The Fall Fling fundraiser to benefit the Child Care Center was held on September 20, and was a beautiful day. Thank you to all of the Church and Child Care Center staff and volunteers who came together to make it a success!



### *Care for Creation: Redirect stuff from landfill*

*Thanks to all who use the Clothing Shed in the parking lot.*

*Volunteer to help with this important project.*

#### **What to Drop-off:**

Used clothing, shoes, sneakers, belts, purses, linens, pillowcases, blankets, curtains, and stuffed animals.

#### **What Not to Drop-off:**

Food, furniture, electronics, household items, books, toys, garbage, pillows, rags, and fabric scraps.

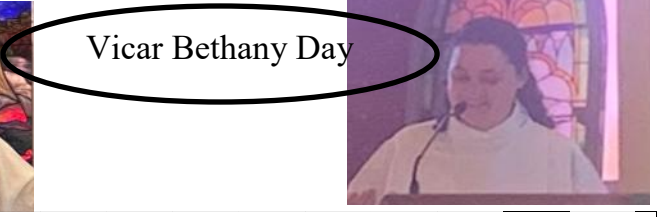
## Our Recent Sunday Worship Leaders



Vicar John Evans



Pastor Lena Warren



Vicar Bethany Day

(Continued from first page)

This is actually the second principle of Christian stewardship. We have a responsibility to care for the earth and use what we've been given to work for a better world. God gave humans the command at the beginning to tend the ground. This, we believe, is our responsibility. As Jesus said, "From everyone who has been given much, much will be required." *Luke 12:48 (NET)*

There are schools of thought out there (even some Christians) that want to make having a lot of wealth a sign of God's blessing and solely for personal enjoyment. Christian stewardship implies otherwise. Not that we cannot enjoy what we've been given, or take care of our own wellbeing with it, but that we have a responsibility to use, care for, and tend it for others' welfare and for God's vision of a just world.

And we will be held accountable for it. This is another principle of Christian stewardship. Like I said, when Jesus mentions eternity, it's always about how we took care of things here in this world. The parable of the talents, the parable of the sheep and the goats, the parable of the wedding banquet where all the guests claimed they could not come because they were too busy — there is a sense that our actions have eternal consequence. This, of course, doesn't override the grace of God that holds us today and into eternity, but how we attend to our lives matters.

Another principle of Christian stewardship is actually about grace. Ultimately, we trust God's grace to catch us when we fail so that we can risk what is beyond our grasp. I think that is sometimes missed in a lot of talk about Christian stewardship. Sometimes, Christian stewardship is about taking a risk toward justice and life. The

servants given the talents risked everything to invest those talents and were rewarded *not* for their getting lots of extra money but for their trust in their master. The one who hid it all away to keep it safe did not do so well. And we know this is about trust because the conversation with this servant was about his belief in his master's character (as cruel), not about how much he had made.

The last principle that I am going to mention (I'm sure you could think of others) is community. Christianity, unlike some religious traditions, is centered on community. We gather at the table for communion. We can only practice Christianity in relationship with our neighbor. Jesus' final commandment to his disciples is, "Love one another as I have loved you." Christianity is a team sport. And so, when we think about stewardship, we should think about community. How can we use what we've been given, how can we care for the resources of the world, so that a more just community, a more beloved community, might be built?

Oh, and one more ... actually the most important one of all! Christian stewardship is built first of all on the truth that we are enough. That God loves us more than we can imagine and God's infinite love is what gives us purpose and worth. It's not what we have or what we do that gives us value in the sight of God. God could not love you more and God will not love you less. It is in this truth that we find our freedom to look at everything else as a gift, as abundance, and as free to tend and use in the work of healing the world.

Peace!  
Pastor Lena

# God's Work. Our Hands.

CWS fundraiser to  
provide period  
packs

Pet Craft Project  
and Collection

***Thanks***  
**to all for generous support  
of time, talent and  
offerings!**

- 1) Venmo.com or the **Venmo** app  
on smart phone  
@stpauls-ryebrook (Laura  
Chen-Schultz)  
If it asks for last four digits: 0804
- 2) You can use **Credit or Debit Card**
- 3) Your bank's **Quickpay** with  
Zelle  
Search for "St. Paul's  
Evangelical Lutheran Church"  
at spelch@msn.com
- 4) By **mailing** it or instructing your  
bank to send a check of whatever  
amount and frequency you choose.

761 King Street, Rye Brook, NY  
10573



Back-To-School  
Backpack Bingo  
fundraiser



# Birthdays

## November

1 Elly Harrold  
 3 Brendan McQueeney  
 4 Tom Giorgi  
 7 Pastor Jim  
 8 Beatriz Rios  
 10 Pete Doykos  
 13 Rev. Martha Cruz  
 15 Wayne Vorpahl  
 19 Dotty Ciminelli  
 19 Julia Birittieri  
 20 Maeve O'Hanlon  
 21 Pat Williams  
 23 Audrey Gallego  
 25 Karine Larsen  
 27 Jessica Onofrio-Franceschini  
 27 Daniel Bruno  
 29 Linda McDermott

## December

2 Kim Salvatore  
 3 John Tormondsen  
 5 Allison Meseck  
 6 Scott Guinta  
 8 Peter Kausas  
 9 Richard Ciminelli  
 9 Ava Gallego  
 17 Missy Trenck  
 20 Kiah Thomas  
 21 Brian Ernst  
 22 Gary Sullivan  
 27 Kaitlyn Armstrong

## January

2 William Budinoff  
 3 Kamille Claudel-Bronson  
 3 Melissa Callwood  
 3 Donna Beadle  
 4 Wilhelm Fakundiny  
 7 Jack Richardson  
 9 Lynn Patrizio  
 12 Margrit Fakundiny  
 13 Sarah Gawle  
 15 Anthony Valbiro  
 16 Chris Mark  
 16 Victoria Wilson  
 17 Rev. Tom Mugavero  
 17 Pat Schmitt  
 22 Russell Kuhns  
 24 Nicole Franceschini  
 24 Matthew Palastro  
 26 Amy Morabito  
 26 Sydney Sullivan  
 27 Michael Garguilo

We Worship at  
**the Mews of Greenwich**  
 one Thursday and  
 one Sunday each month

### Upcoming Calendar

11/2 All Saints Sunday  
 11/3 Blood Drive  
 11/9 Budget Meeting  
       Old Testament Pot Luck  
 12/14 Semi annual  
       Congregational Meeting

**Yoga** at St. Paul's  
 Saturdays at 10am  
 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays  
 of the month at 7pm



## *Christmas Poinsettias*

Mail your request in by **December 15th.**

Suggested donation \$35.

Please make checks payable to "St. Paul's"

I (We) wish to contribute poinsettias:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

In Loving memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

## **We welcome all**

who are seeking God's love and grace.

## **We welcome all**

because God welcomes all.

*We encourage young children to participate and make their presence known.*

*We are many races and cultures, different sexual orientations, gender identities and families of various configurations and single people. We come from a wide variety of places on earth and individual spiritual journeys. We are various stages of life, differing abilities and health, and economic circumstances.*

*Our unity is in Christ*

*who calls for us to reject division and discrimination.*

## **Pastor Jim is on Sabbatical**

from September thru November, returning on December 1<sup>st</sup>. For any pastoral needs that arise you can contact Pastor Lena Warren. Pastor Lena will be covering council meetings and other pastoral duties.

Her contact phone number: 215 589-8800

For administrative issues you can call the office  
Mon-Fri 9am-Noon

Sent with a prayer to:

**St. Paul's**  
761 King Street at Comly Ave.  
Rye Brook, New York 10573  
(914) 939-8170

