

The Epistle of St. Paul's, Bristol Parish Petersburg, Virginia

January, 2009

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Deadline for February issue:
Noon, January 19th

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Happy New Year to you and all your friends and family, and to this great old parish of St. Paul's! We know already that 2009 will hold many opportunities for new friends and experiences, and also for St. Paul's to move forward in its re-birth with the call of Rick Greenwood to be the new Rector.

With the calling of Rick, St. Paul's is emerging from a *long* period of transition. It has been 14 years since St. Paul's called its last settled rector, and it has been *my pleasure* to be with you the past three and a half years. God's invisible hand has guided us to this place and with steadfast commitment and faith St. Paul's will continue to be blessed this New Year.

Faithfully,
Marjorie+

THE REV. RICHARD "RICK" GREENWOOD CALLED

After a year long process of searching, we have presented a candidate to the Vestry. The Vestry has issued the call to The Rev. Richard "Rick" Greenwood. Rick has accepted the call and will be joining St. Paul's family. Rick's first sermon with us will be Feb. 1, 2009. After the 10:30 service we will have a reception to celebrate both Rick and Marjorie.

We will be sending out a letter, in the near future, with many more details. In the mean time please feel free to ask any member of the Discernment committee or Vestry about Rick.

The Discernment Committee would like to thank you all for your help, patience and prayers during this process. Everyone on the committee has worked very hard and would not have been able to do it without your support.

Marjorie has been a blessing to St. Paul's. We would not be where we are today without her. Marjorie's guidance, faith and love have helped St. Paul's to secure a wonderful future. We wish her all the best in her new journey.

Concerts by Candlelight

Every second Friday of the month
as part of Petersburg's *Friday for the Arts*.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 9TH

6:30 P.M.

The Mike Goldberg Trio
Woodwind Ensemble

Donations to The Whittle Music & Arts Fund
are always gratefully accepted. Please look
for the yellow envelopes and place them in
the plate near the door.

*These contributions fully support and fund
St. Paul's Music Ministry in downtown Petersburg.*

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## Little Notes from You

"I do so appreciate the church for  
remembering me with such a beautiful Christmas  
card.

Thank you,  
Dollie Rogers"

*Many good thoughts and acts of kindness are returned.*

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**"As you have done it for the least of these,
you have done it for me" — Outreach News
and Opportunities**

Between Thanksgiving and the end of the year,
St. Paul's parishioners prepared and donated 46 gift
bags for the homeless and needy. These bags were
distributed mostly in downtown Petersburg, at
nearby soup kitchens, shelters, homes for low-
income, disabled folks—and even homeless people
sleeping at the bus stop. So now if you see someone
walking down Washington Street with what looks
like an out of place Ukrops' shopping bag, it just
might be from us!

Many of you also helped to support our
Christmas family this year—a young mother with a
critically ill six-month old son and a lovely five-
year-old daughter. Thanks to Linda Maclin and
Boulevard Flowers, we were able to provide the
family with a real Christmas tree. And thanks to so
many of you, Santa Claus did not forget to stop by
this family's home this Christmas!

God bless all of you who kept needy and lonely
people in your prayers *and your heart* during this
most blessed time of the year. You all have truly
been a blessing of Christ to others! Keep up the
good work in 2009.

And we do continue to collect food for the St.
Joseph's Food Pantry on 4th Sundays of each month.
We give thanks to John Van Landingham for
carrying the food over for our neighbors to
distribute each month. Many of us are aware of an
increased need for the simple things, such as food,
by many families who are not normally dependent
on others. Please continue to remember the
unemployed and those who cannot help themselves.

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## Stewardship/Finance note

We begin the New Year with hope *and*  
uncertainty. St. Paul's cannot accomplish its goals  
for 2009 without planning for it. Many parishioners  
have not yet responded to the call for pledge  
support. Unfortunately, the Vestry cannot form a  
realistic budget without the broad financial support  
of all parishioners.

The idea in providing the option to not make a  
pledge at this time, but 'to promise to financially  
support the parish' was to encourage those who had  
never pledged before to make a commitment. It was  
not expected that those who had previously pledged  
would opt out of pledging.

Pledging to support the work of Christ is a  
spiritual matter, not so much a financial one.  
Pledging indicates faith, trust in God, and what is  
really in one's heart. Let us pray to replace fear and  
uncertainty with true faith and dependence on God.  
If we don't plan for it, it won't happen.

## St. Paul's Annual Meeting & Vestry Election

The Annual Meeting & Vestry Election will be held January 4<sup>th</sup> in the church after the 10:30 a.m. service. The meeting will begin with the election of 3 new vestry members, and we will officially thank outgoing members, Steve Tuck, Elizabeth Chandler and Barbara Reynolds, for their service on the vestry the past three very important years.

The current Communicants in Good Standing list has been distributed and all those on it are eligible to vote and to run for election. Nominations will be accepted from the floor.

A review of 2008 will be given by the outgoing Interim Rector, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, and the Treasurer. Other committee reports may be given and the written Annual Report for 2008 will be distributed.

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Convocation VI Pre-Council Meeting to be held at St. Paul's

Clergy and Delegates for Convocation VI will meet at St. Paul's in Bristol Hall on the evening of Tuesday, January 20th at 7:00 p.m. This is our annual pre-council meeting during which representatives from our convocation to the diocesan Executive Board will be elected. And from the Diocesan website:

"Pre-Council Meetings provide Delegates the information essential to expedite the business of Council.

The 2009 Diocesan Operating Budget recommended by the Executive Board will be presented in detail. These meetings are the appropriate forum to resolve issues with the goal of passing the Budget by title on the floor of Council

Resolutions to be voted at Annual Council will be presented.

A review of programs and a preview of new initiatives will be presented."

Anyone who is interested in the work of the Diocese or issues affecting the church is invited to attend. This includes all members of St. Paul's. Our clergy and delegates will be in attendance to host the gathering, but it would also be nice to see other members of our church present to welcome our visitors.

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

1 st	Betty Jordan
2 nd	Nathaniel Cuthbert
20 th	Gracelyn Parks
30 th	Barbara Reynolds
31 st	Shirley Willcox
24 th	Wayne & Heath Thompson
25 th	Wayne & Marti Tuck

Did we miss your birthday or anniversary?

Please forgive us! If we did, let us know. We may not have had the information. As a parish family, we really do want to remember each person's birthday and anniversary.

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## Recommended Reading

One of my favorite books of all times is a slim little volume entitled "To Love as God Loves: Conversations with the Early Church" written by Roberta Bondi, a church history professor at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University. It was first published in 1991 and I probably have re-read it each year since then. One does not have to have a degree in theology to understand and enjoy reading it.

Bondi in her own words, "Being a Christian means learning to love with God's love. But God's love is not a warm feeling in the pit of the stomach. It has definite characteristics we learn in the course of our life, in the behavior and teaching of the early monastics, as we ponder over what we can say about God as God deals with us, and finally, as we model our own lives on what we have learned."

This book can be found online if you search under the title and/or the author. It should cost less than \$15 and is well worth the price. I sincerely hope you enjoy reading it too.

Faithfully,  
Marjorie+

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