

SAINT PAUL'S Epistle

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GOOD FRIDAY AND A MOTHER'S GRIEF

I am not one to see a movie over and over again. The one exception, however, is Franco Zeffirelli's 1977 mini-series, *Jesus of Nazareth*. In my opinion it stands as the most moving portrayal of the life and passion of Christ to date. While Mel Gibson's, *The Passion of the Christ*, may have set the bar for the most realistically *gruesome* portrayal of Jesus' passion, it doesn't even come close to capturing the depth and mystery of his life.

Over time I have, admittedly, grown desensitized to the portrayal of Jesus' passion in Zeffirelli's film. Maybe a little dose of Gibson's movie helps to establish a kind of "reality check." After all, Jesus was tortured and executed in one of the most inhumane ways known to history—crucifixion. His treatment at the hands of the Romans would have made the abuse of prisoners at Abu Ghraib seem mild in comparison.

What catches me off guard, however—literally moving me to tears each time—is the portrayal of Mary's passion: her suffering, her grief. Zeffirelli's Mary, the mother of Jesus, is portrayed by Olivia Hussey, who had played Juliet in his 1968 film, *Romeo and Juliet*. And while her acting throughout the movie is admittedly stilted—as if the Virgin Mary were perpetually in some altered state of bliss or detachment—the *grief* she portrays as she cradles and rocks the lifeless body of her crucified son gets to me every time. The grief, after all, is a *mother's* grief over her murdered son. I'm not sure that there can be any loss greater than that of a parent losing a child. Other deaths are tragic, without a doubt. But a parent's loss of their child runs the deepest. It is by its very nature a crime *against* nature.

Sandro Botticelli's, *Lament*, shown here, captures this mother's grief in a moving and passionate way. Here Mary has swooned, her grief so deep, her loss so great. The overwhelming finality of holding her dead son in her arms is too much to bear.



Sandro Botticelli, *Lamentation over the Dead Christ with Saints* c. 1490

I have always wondered, even as one with decades of theological training, whether God couldn't have found a better way to redeem the world. If God is God, why was it necessary to sacrifice his son? What parent would do such a thing?

And as soon as I ask this question, I think of the countless mothers who sent their sons, and now daughters, off to war throughout our nation's history. I think, for example, of the unimaginable loss of life on the beaches of Normandy and around the globe. I touch the tragic grief of countless mothers whose own dreams died in those battles.

Sometimes, history has shown, it takes the *ultimate* sacrifice to bring an end to tyranny and oppression. Death brings life. Oh, we yearn for a far better way, but in the face of evil whose intent is even greater evil, such sacrifice is the price to be paid.

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LENT, HOLY WEEK & EASTER SCHEDULE

Wednesday Evening Prayer: April 1 at 7:00PM

Soup and Salad Time at 5:30PM

Palm Sunday: April 5: 8:00 and 10:30AM

Maundy Thursday Holy Communion:

April 9 at 7PM

Good Friday Tenebrae: April 10 at 7PM

EASTER SUNDAY: April 12 at 8:00 and 10:30AM

Easter Breakfast: 8:45 to 10:00 AM

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On that tragic Friday, one we call “Good”, a mother grieved inconsolably over the premature loss, the tragic waste, of her son—her first born.

But wait! On the Sunday that follows, the one we call “Easter”, death gave way to life. A mother’s grief gave way to a *disciple’s* giddy joy. Through an intervening love greater than our imagination—greater than death—that dead and lifeless son is now our risen and victorious Lord.

Pastor Hugh Haffenreffer



SOUND SYSTEM UPDATE:

We are truly sorry for the inconvenience that this may cause those who need to be available for emergencies, but after having had two separate sound experts diagnose our sound system the verdict was unanimous. Our problems—the crackling and hissing and the dropping out of the sound during worship—are due to cell phones, blackberries and pagers. They all use the same or similar frequency as do our wireless microphones. And even if they are on mute (or vibrate mode), they still continue to emit a frequency that virtually jams our system. Nine years ago, when we purchased our present system, this interference was non-existent. Today we would not be able to purchase our system because of the frequencies on which it transmits. And it will only become worse once all our local TV stations go digital.

So, for now . . .

Please *POWER OFF* all cell phones and other communication devices during worship.

What will our long-term solution be? To replace the three wireless microphones that we presently have, two lavalier (or lapel) and one hand-held, would cost roughly \$2,100. Each system (costing approximately \$700 each) includes a wireless receiver, a “body pack” transmitter, and a clip-on

lavalier microphone. Some new ones come with an additional hand-held microphone.

Our plan, recently OK’d by council, is to start a fund-raising campaign for the sound system. Starting on Sunday, April 5th, envelopes will be available in the fellowship hall on which people can either make a pledge or include a donation to the sound. As soon as we have raised over 75% of the necessary funds to replace the wireless components, we will go ahead and make the purchase. A progress chart will be posted in the Fellowship Hall.

Please help us update our sound system! Once the summer comes and there are more competing signals in the air, we may have to go to not using the sound system at all. This is not only a problem for those who may have a hard time hearing in worship, it also makes it impossible to record our worship services for those who are homebound.

If you would like more information, please talk with Pastor.



SERVICE OPPORTUNITY AT SOUTH PARK INN

WEDNESDAY: MAY 6th, 2009 AT 4:30 pm

This opportunity is open to the **FIRST 10 PARTICIPANTS TO REPLY** and are willing to share their love with those less fortunate.

We will meet at church no later than 4:30 pm to ride together over to the South Park Inn homeless shelter and serve dinner at the inn.

Contact Jim Newmark at (860) 231-2769 or by email at: james.newmark@goodrich.com

CHURCH COUNCIL



MEET OUR CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Richard Seip, Pres.	Caring Ministries
Jim Newmark, V. P.	Mutual Ministry/ Fellowship
Bill Fischer Jr., Secty	Outreach
Heather Christensen	Youth/Education
Julie Perry	Evangelism
Winnie Sawrun	Worship & Music
Alan Niederfringer	Unassigned

We are still trying to fill the three vacant seats that are open on Council. Please consider sharing your leadership skills with your St. Paul's family.



Hope for a **RETREAT FOR ST. PAUL'S WOMEN** (of all ages)!

Our hearts yearn for this!

The theme will be: **"The Healing Power of Hope"**.

We will gather at St. Paul's on a Saturday (9:30 AM -

4 PM) Date to be announced

It has been said that "we retreat in order to advance". Please pray for Hope to come forth! Time set aside to reflect share our life experiences, and support one another, can be a gift we give ourselves and to each other. Please contact Ellie Bengtson, 666-7877 or Carol Farley, 828-5306.



Welcome New Members!

We are pleased to welcome our new (and returning) members to St. Paul's. Please take the opportunity to extend a warm welcome to these sisters and brothers when you have opportunity:

~**Sherwood "Woody" J. Anderson & Sharon Finn**
105 Partridge Dr. Southington, 860-276-1245

~**Wendy A. Hartman & Robert "Bob" Pierce**
127 Barkledge Dr. Newington, 860-371-4655

~**Beverly Liegey**
100 Executive Sq., Wethersfield, 860-513-4149

~**Roy & Gayle**
31 Summerfield Drive, Wethersfield, 860-529-4571

~**Alan P. Niederfringer**
19 Wagon Hill Lane, Avon, 860-673-8328

~**William "Bill" A. & Susan "Sue" P. Sonstrom**
7 Ridge View Crossing, Newington, 860-665-9745



Youth Fundraiser Tag Sale

Saturday May 23rd 9 AM - 2 PM

Donate your gently used treasures. NO clothes, books or furniture. Contact Debbie Viola with any questions, 529-5051.



- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Pam Speno | 13 Amy Leibenguth |
| 2 Jennifer Lohmann | 13 Tracy Newmark |
| 6 Barbara Bonds | 18 Arthur Bruce |
| 7 Ken Schultz | 21 Melissa Cheyney |
| 8 Kathie Daly | 21 Christine Intravia |
| 9 Judy Gerken | 22 Christopher Anderson |
| 10 Robert Durkin | 23 Marge Gentino |
| 11 Tim Malinguaggio | 30 Mary Baumgartel |
| 12 Lillian Doerschler | |



A SPECIAL EASTER SUNDAY

We need your assistance in decorating the large cross in the sanctuary on Easter Morning. Each family should bring in a **single fresh flower** to place on the cross while transforming the cross. Mark your calendar as a reminder and join in what perhaps will become a new Easter tradition.

OUR DISCERNMENT PROCESS

As most of our members should know, St. Paul's has been engaged in a discernment process to determine the future priorities and ministry direction of St. Paul's. We began in January with a "kick-off" pot-luck event. During March we held a number of home meetings where over 80 of our members came together to share their insight and ideas about this congregation and the future they wish for it. Then on March 1, following the late service, we came together to explore and celebrate our history and what kinds of trends, patterns or meaning we were able to discover in it. Most recently we sent out letters to those in the congregation who had not yet participated in any of the process with that hope that they might be willing to share any insights and concerns they might have. It is our goal that everyone have the opportunity to share in this process so that any of the decisions about our future will reflect the widest consensus possible.

On **March 28** the congregation will have come together once again to explore its "Secret Handshakes", that is, how we do what we do and why. The purpose of this is to be able to build upon the strengths that we have and change or amend any of our practices that do not serve God's mission in this place.

Throughout this process a Vision Team has helped to weigh through all of the responses and input from our members and carefully draw up interim goal statements that might be adopted by our congregation. These goal statements articulate a possible specific, attainable, and measurable goal that might guide the next 4 or 5 years of our ministry. While the Vision Team's job is to create the goal statements, it is up to the whole congregation to choose which ones it will adopt.

On **Sunday, April 26, from 9AM until 1PM**, the congregation will have the opportunity to decide the future of St. Paul's by prioritizing the goals of St. Paul's. Each person in attendance on that day will be given the opportunity to cast their votes for their first, second and third choices in four separate categories of goals. Through your vote, one goal per category will be selected. Later on, on **Saturday, May 16 at 5PM**, we will gather one more time to share your decisions and then start the process of organizing our future around these goals.

Please continue to pray for God's guidance as together we discern God's will for our future. Together our future promises to be bright!

Youth News

Friday April 10th after the
Good Friday Service,
egg dyeing for Saturday's hunt.

Saturday April 11th 9:00a.m.
set up for Easter breakfast.
11:00 egg hunt.

Sunday April 12th Easter Breakfast.
Signup sheet in the Fellowship Hall.



Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday April 11th
11 a.m.

Grades Pre K - 5



ST. PAUL'S MEMBERS IN SERVICE FOR April 2009

ACOLYTES:

Linda Anderson, Coordinator, 659-4094

- Apr 5 - Kaitlin Anderson
9 - Jay Viola
10 - Amanda Piscitello
12 - Josh Marzano - 8:00 AM
Celia Cheyney -10:30 AM
19 - Jay Viola
26 - Kaitlin Anderson

ALTAR GUILD:

Linda Anderson, Coordinator, 659-4094

- Apr 5 - Jennie Dotts & Betty Lamo
9 - Anderson's
10 - Anderson's
12 - Carol F., Debbie H., Winnie S. - 8:00 AM
Ann B., Elaine S. - 10:30 AM
19 - Helen Peterson & Mary Susla
26 - Anderson's

ASSISTING MINISTERS:

Coordinator

- Apr 5 - Emily Lourigan - 8:00 AM
Jim Newmark -10:30 AM
9 - Jim Newmark Maundy Thursday
12 - Art Bruce - 8:00 AM
Mary Procyk -10:30 AM
19 - Jerry Vaillancourt - 8:00 AM
Bill Fischer -10:30 AM
26 - Patty Bengtson - 8:00 AM
Jerry Vaillancourt -10:30 AM

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS:

Sue Agne, Coordinator, 563-0776

- Apr 5 - Dick Agne
9 - Sue Agne
12 - Sue Agne
19 - Curt Leonard
26 - Pastor Hugh

FELLOWSHIP HOUR HOSTS:

Winnie Sawrun, Coordinator, 529-7588

- Apr 5 - Ellie & Charles Bengtson
12 - ***Easter Breakfast***
19 - Carol & Art Bruce
26 - Grace & Robert Durkin

FINANCE:

Mary Procyk, Coordinator, 257-4793

- Apr 5 - Mary Procyk
Helen Peterson Holy Week
12 - Winnie Sawrun
19 - Lillian Doerschler
26 - Lois Woy

LECTORS:

Lillian Doerschler, Coordinator, 529-1939

- Apr 5 - Lillian Doerschler
9 - Jim Newmark Maundy Thursday
10 - Emily Lourigan
12 - Vicki Anderson - 8:00 AM
Sue Agne -10:30 AM
22 - Carol Bruce
26 - Kyla Anderson

NURSERY:

Ann French, Coordinator, 529-3245

- Apr 5 - Pam & Rachel DiNatalie
12 - Easter Sunday
19 - Julie & Matt Perry
26 - Margaret & Erica DeBlois

TAPING MINISTRY:

Coordinator

- Apr - ***Volunteer Needed***


USHERS:

Brian Beckwith, Coordinator, 8AM, 563-4066

Louise Lostocco, Coordinator, 10:30AM, 529-3079

- Apr - Emily & Les Lourigan - 8:00 AM
Jan Pergrande & Carol Farley -10:30 AM

April 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
5 Palm Sunday Reading of Passion History Holy Comm. 8:00 AM Holy Comm. 10:30 AM	6	7 Vision Team Meeting 6:30 PM Outreach meeting 7 PM OA 7:30 PM	8 Bible Study 10:30 AM Confm. Class 6:15 PM AA 7 PM Choir 7:30 PM	9 Thur. Grp. 10 AM Maundy Thursday Service 7 PM	10 AA 10 AM Good Friday Service 7 PM Easter egg dyeing after the service	11 Easter Egg Hunt 11 AM AA 7:30 PM
12 Easter Sunday Holy Comm. 8:00 AM Holy Comm. 10:30 AM Decorating of large cross at both services. Caleb Anthony Parchment Baptism at 10:30 service	13 Scouts downstairs 6-9 PM	14 OA 7:30 PM	15 No Conf. Class No Bible Study AA 7 PM Choir 7:30 PM Epistle Deadline	16 7:30 AM Men's Breakfast Thur. Grp. 10 AM	17 ConferCamp AA 10 AM	18 ConferCamp AA 7:30 PM
Pastor away on vacation —————>						
19 ConferCamp Pr. Burgess to preach Holy Comm. 8:00 AM Holy Comm. 10:30 AM Harvest Fair meeting after the 10:30 service.	20	21 OA 7:30 PM	22 No Bible Study No Conf. Class AA 7PM Choir 7:30 PM	23 Thur. Grp. 10 AM	24 AA 10 AM	25 Council & Vision Team 7:30 PM AA 7:30 PM
Pastor on discernment retreat —————>						
26 Pr. Ted Asta to Preach Holy Comm. 8:00 AM Holy Comm. 10:30 AM "Prioritizing our Goals" During both services	27	28 Par. Adm. 6:30 PM Council 7:30 OA 7:30 PM	29 Bible Study 10:30 AM Conf. Class 6:15 PM AA 7PM Choir 7:30 PM	30 Thur. Grp. 10 AM		

SAINT
PAUL'S **Epistle**

SAINT PAUL'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

371 Wolcott Hill Road

Wethersfield, CT 06109

www.stpaulswethersfield.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

SAINT PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Worship at 8:00 and 10:30AM
SCS & Adult Ed. at 9:00AM

OFFICERS AND STAFF

Rev. Hugh R. B. Haffenreffer, Pastor.....Office: (860) 529-5397
Cell Phone: (860) 966-7360
pastorh@stpaulswethersfield.org
Office ManagerJanet Vasel: janet@stpaulswethersfield.org
Council President.....Rick Seip
TreasurerTom Grottke
Financial Sect'y.....Mary Procyk
Minister of MusicMelissa Cheyney
Superintendent of Sunday Church School.....Alice Rupparr

REMINDERS:

Don't forget to bring a cut flower to on Easter to put on the Lenten
Cross!

April 2009