

# Changing Lives

## WHAT DOES LOVE REQUIRE OF US?

Beginning last March, our lives changed in extraordinary ways. Social distancing requirements and stay-at-home orders altered how and where we were able to work, eat, gather, serve, and worship. Our physical buildings closed, but clergy and parishioners at St. Peter & St. Paul stepped forward to assure that the vital work of ministry continued. Through activities such as live streaming Morning Prayer, Compline & Sunday Eucharist, we responded in both work and action, to the question “What does love require of us?”

This year's Annual Giving theme, ***Taking the Next Step***, reminds us that our financial support, in the form of a pledge to the Operating Budget of St. Peter & St. Paul, is an essential component of our ability to carry out the work of the church. Whether we gather for worship inside our building, in our parking lots, or online, we continue to be the body of Christ through our ministries, our witness and our care for one another.

We cannot know what lies ahead of us, but we remain confident in the assurance of God's abiding and steadfast love. Because of your generous and faithful gifts, our church is able to keep doing what love requires of us by nurturing life-giving, joyful ministries both inside and outside our parish walls.

You have all always been so supportive of St. Peter & St. Paul, generously giving of your time, wisdom, experience, passion, and financial resources to sustain and grow our work and ministries. As we continue this year's Annual Giving campaign, we hope we can count on your continued support.

For those who have some difficulties or perhaps have misplaced your pledges, please reach out to Blanca and together we can help in making sure St. Peter & St. Paul has the resources to continue to reach all of our church families.

Please prayerfully consider the amount you have pledged financially so that St. Peter & St. Paul can continue to do what love requires us to do, by sharing God's love with even more people and making a positive difference in the lives of everyone in our community and beyond.

If you have questions or would like to discuss making a pledge to St. Peter & St. Paul, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Faithfully, Russ King  
Stewardship Chair



St. Peter & St. Paul Episcopal  
Church

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Interim Vicar.....Fr. Mike Fulk

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Bishop's Committee

Mike Schroeder, Senior Warden

Jose Trevino, Junior Warden

Leonor Fletcher, Secretary

Martha Oxford, Treasurer

Russ King

Jake Mejia

Henry Oertel

## NEWS FROM THE DIOCESE

Greetings from the Diocese of West Texas! Who among us could have ever imagined that (literally) the day after your parish profile workshop, the world as we knew it would begin to change so quickly and so radically? Within just a few days of our visit (and while I was on Spring break vacationing with my family) COVID-19 began to permeate the news and with it came the cancelation of most major sporting events, the steep decline of the stock market, and the closure of our churches.

Our lives, routines, and sense of normalcy all changed in just a few days.

I cannot express our gratitude for the work you all have done since that day. You have been SO faithful in your determination to continue your worship life and your ministry even if limited by the COVID-19 pandemic. Father Mike and your leaders have kept things on a steady course, and you even started this beautiful newsletter! Even though you don't need me to tell you this, I just have to. St. Peter and St. Paul is a special place!

Since we gathered together in March, we have collected all of your responses from the parish profile workshop, we have created your parish profile, and we have begun intentional conversations with clergy



who are interested in learning more about your church. Of course, the whole process of placing your new vicar has been greatly slowed by the virus and ensuing shutdown and things have taken much longer than any of us would have hoped. However, our conversations with clergy who are interested in learning more about you and the possibilities in Mission have begun again.

Our brothers and sisters across the Diocese are finding such creative ways to offer worship and ministry! It is humbling to see the tireless work that our 87 congregations are doing. Our folks are becoming experts at YouTube, Facebook live, high quality streaming, and daily services online. For many, this was totally new territory. For others, the challenges included insufficient internet and wireless capabilities onsite, and a host of other challenges some didn't even know they had. Like you, they have found ways to adapt and they continue to

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learn new and improved ways to offer the best possible experience for everyone. The majority of our congregations are offering online only for now.

As expected, one of the biggest challenges is stewardship. No public worship means no plate offering, which represents a

large portion of income in so many places. The virus has placed a number of individuals and families in financial hardship and they simply cannot give what they would normally give. However, despite all that, we continue to hear miraculous stories of how needs are being met even now! I know that your leaders are

communicating the importance of your giving to your AMAZING church so that it can continue to operate and ministry not only in this time, but also into the future when we finally get back to some sense of normal.

On behalf of Bishop Reed and all of us here in San Antonio, we want to thank you for your work, your commitment, and your spirit. We are in regular communication with your leaders as we prepare for your future!

Thanks again for your work and ministry!

The Ven. Mike Besson  
Archdeacon, Diocese of West Texas

## MOSAIC HISTORY

This beautiful mosaic had been outside under that pergola that surrounds the labyrinth. A windstorm last year took it down, broke part of the frame and scattered some of the tiles. It has been beautifully restored through the efforts of Henry Oertel and Chet Oxford and now resides in our Sanctuary on the right side of the altar.

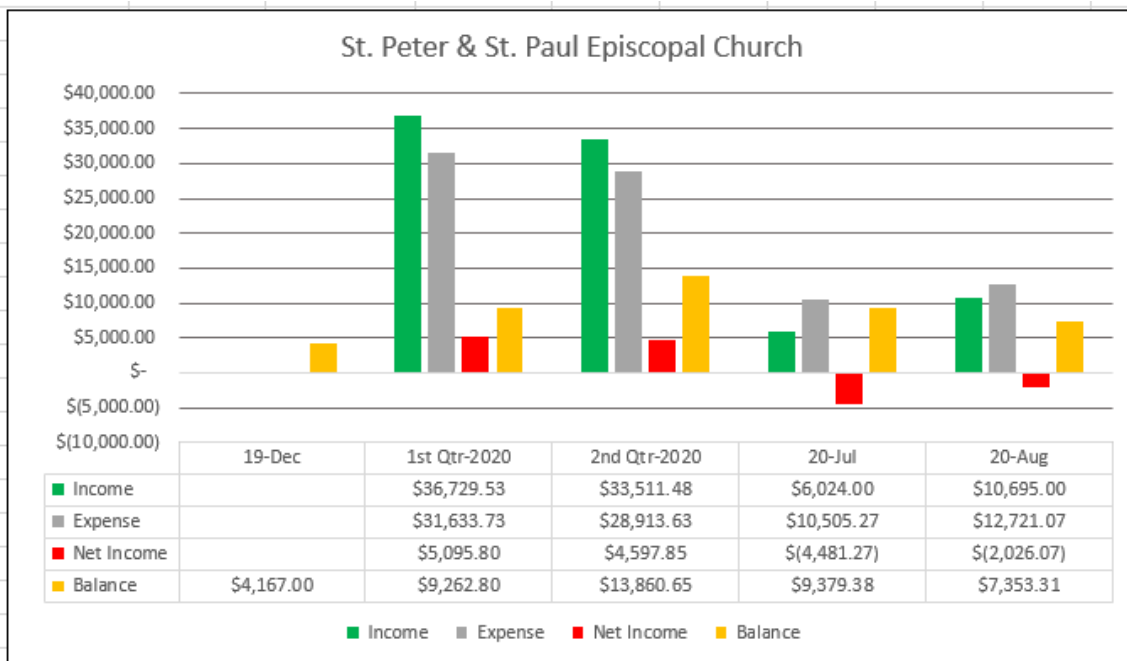
Do you know the history of this work of art? Who made it? When? And, of course, why? We'd like to credit the original artist and put the history of it in the church scrapbook.

If you know any of the history of this piece, please send a note to Blanca Adame at [secretary@peterpaul.org](mailto:secretary@peterpaul.org). She'll make sure that we don't lose this part of our history.



## FINANCIAL UPDATE

Below is the updated graph of income and expenses through 8/31/2020. Because of space availability, the data has been combined into 1st and 2nd quarter columns and then July and August numbers. Once again, our expenses exceeded our income in August by \$2,026. Please know that we are being very careful with our finances and only the necessities are being purchased. Keep our church in your prayers that we will continue to be able to pay our way for the things required of us.



## PRAY FOR YOUR CHURCH

You are encouraged to pray each day . Use this time to pray for our church, congregation and community. Here's some guides for that prayer.

- Pray for God's guidance in your spiritual journey
- Pray for guidance of our ministries and wisdom in creating new ministries
- Pray for our clergy and their families
- Pray for our church staff and volunteers
- Pray that our financial decisions will glorify God
- Pray that we can expand our outreach and make new disciples
- Pray that the spirit of generosity will grow throughout our congregation.
- Pray for our congregation for revival and for the sick and grieving.
- Pray for our families, marriages, parents, and grandparents.
- Pray for the homebound.
- Pray for our neighborhood and community and our missional outreach to those in need.
- Pray for all our ministries: children, youth, adult, music, and teaching ministries.

Lord, help me see all the blessings in my life. I come to you with an open and grateful heart. Teach me to be a good steward of all that I have. Open my eyes and my heart to see all the opportunities around me. Fill my heart and let me respond in every situation with an attitude of worship and a spirit of generosity. Renew my faith as I ask "Lord, where would you want me to be in my giving?" Amen.

## PROYECTO DESARROLLO HUMANO

UPDATE from the Colonia:

We have received \$34,370 from donors. We have used those funds to purchase grocery gift cards and have paid electric bills for our people.

Whenever we received food, we gave it to people. Any help



you all can come up with is appreciated.

Sr. Fatima



## FILLING THAT LAST SPACE

The article on page 1 asks the question—what does love require of us? The answer is in Romans 13:8-10.

<sup>8</sup>Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup>The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>10</sup>Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

Oh, that we could all truly live by this. Love my neighbor as I love me. Yes, even the one who drives you crazy, the one you don't know, the one who likes to gossip, or acts "better" than me. Everybody ... red, yellow, black or white ... We are all precious in his sight. Jesus loves ALL the adults & children of the WORLD!! So should we!

## FATHER MIKE'S MUSINGS

I really like to write this column for the newsletter since I don't need to follow strict composition guidelines. I can just ramble!

As most of you know by now Blanca Adame, our efficient and wonderful parish secretary, is having surgery on Thursday. Please keep her and her surgeon in your prayers. Blanca will be out of the office for part of September, but don't forget her. Cards and phone calls would certainly brighten her recovery period.

The Diocese has decided to allow groups to regather in the church complex after September 14. Of course, this still means that social distancing and masks will be observed. This should be good news for the Scouts and other groups. Depending on Judge Cortez, we may be able to open the church for Sunday worship using the guidelines that were established when we opened for several Sundays in June.

The Diocese has assured me that they have not forgotten about SPSP during this pandemic. The virus has simply put so many things on hold. Deployment of clergy to the Valley is only one of many items that was put on the back burner. I hope that we hear something soon, but I understand that there is reluctance to place clergy until such time as we can worship in person.

Our virtual worship continues with Morning Prayer on Monday through Saturday at 9:30 am. Join us on Facebook or the church's website! Compline, the Church's nighttime prayer, is at 9:00 pm each evening. I wish more of the parish would join our virtual Sunday Eucharist. I know that it is not the same thing as physically being present for worship, but it does help to keep us connected as a faith community and certainly is one way to worship the Lord. Sunday Eucharist is at 10:00 am on Facebook or the church's web site.

As our students and teachers return to an uncertain year it is important for us to keep them in our prayers. We pray for protection from the virus and that the policies established for this school year will keep all safe. However, as a former teacher, I cannot imagine the difficulties teachers will encounter this school year in preparing and presenting virtual lessons and, in some cases, in-person lessons at the same time. I have a friend who is spending 12+ hours each day teaching and preparing and still doesn't feel adequately prepared for what is being asked of teachers. Be kind to teachers since they are building the plane while trying to fly it.

On a more serious note, I would like to say a few words about SPSP's financial situation. I know that some feel that the only thing the church ever talks about is money, but we need money to keep the church



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open. The contributions to SPSP from March through August have fallen far below what was pledged and what was needed to meet salaries and other expenses. If we had not been able to take advantage of the Payroll Protection Plan, we would be in desperate straits. It is easy to forget about Sunday worship and the church's needs when you are not coming on Sundays; but our expenses go on whether we are in the church building or not. Another worry is whether our “Winter Texans” will be back this year. We depend on their contributions to make our budget. Please remember what you pledged and try to catch up. If you are able, consider giving a little more to help with our shortfall since some have been financially impacted by the pandemic.

Please keep SPSP and me in your prayers and I will keep you in my prayers. Have a great beginning of fall.

Fr. Mike

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

These names are from the church prayer lists. Please lift these people up with your daily prayers.



- Eola Martin
- Mike Martin
- Terri Burleson
- San Juana
- Linda Teuling
- Paul Tannehill
- Irene Dimas
- Rosie Palacios
- Rodriguez Family (Marco, Carol, Kayla)
- Vidal, Sarah & Family
- Blanca Adame

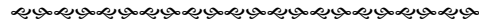
Names are kept on this prayer list for 30 days. If someone needs to be kept on after 30 days, we ask that you please contact Blanca Adame in the church office.

**BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES**

Wishes for happy birthdays are always appreciated. And, anniversaries are to be celebrated.

**BIRTHDAYS**

- Donald Egle 9/10
- Harold Tucker 9/10
- Lola Mejia 9/13
- Ardath Egle 9/18
- Wendy Schroeder 9/19
- Kelly Cremar 9/20
- Zabella Vazquez 9/22
- Zen Vazquez 9/22
- Cynthia Ponce 9/23
- Martha Oxford 9/27



**ANNIVERSARIES**

- David & Jan Nichols 9/12
- Jesus & Delia Perea 9/13
- Marco & Carol Rodriguez 9/20
- Chet & Martha Oxford 9/29



St. Peter & St. Paul Episcopal Church is located at 2310 N. Stewart Road Mission, TX 78574 (956) 585-5005 www.peterpaul.org secretary@peterpaul.org

We are a part of the Diocese of West Texas under the direction of Bishop David Reed and Fr. Mike Fulk, Interim Vicar

TO:

PLEASE PLACE STAMP HERE

