

## **Easter Letter St. Paul's, Warkworth**

April, 2022

Greetings in Christ,

After a long, cold, dark winter, we are happy to see signs of spring in the air. Days are longer, and there is a warmth to the sun which was missing during the colder months. Green shoots are poking up all around, and early bulbs are starting to show their promise of blossoms to come.

All around us, Earth is singing praise to the changing seasons.

Here at St. Paul's, we also sing praise. The somber sounds and introspection of Lent are now opening to the joy of the Resurrection: Christ is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

At St. Paul's, we rejoice in the presence of the risen Lord. Looking around us, we see how our lives here have been enriched with Christ's presence, with God's grace, and with the energy of the Spirit. We are thriving in so many ways, within the Church family and in our wider community:

- Our Kids' Club, despite the constrictions of Covid protocols, is finding ways to demonstrate God's love in our community, taking part in a variety of activities and fundraisers. Our hope is, that as restrictions loosen, they will be able to initiate some of the programs they had planned pre-pandemic.
- We are an Affirming congregation, recognizing that God's love 'colours outside the lines' and that people's sexual orientation and gender identity are gifts of God, and not lifestyle choices. We embrace and include all peoples, of all abilities and identities, in our life of faith.
- Music at St. Paul's is vibrant and lively: we now have a band! Guitars and drums and keyboard and an open invitation to join and sing, no matter your 'age or stage.'
- St. Paul's worship time on Sunday mornings is engaging and enriching. We take time to pray, to greet each other, to read scripture and connect with the text. Sometimes this involves small-group discussions, other times a more traditional sermon. At all times, people are encouraged to add their voice to the exploration of our faith.
- We are making use of technology. Services are Facebook live-streamed, then archived, so people can watch at any time. We use PowerPoint and a large screen for music videos, the order of service, and our announcements.
- Our voice can be heard outside our church walls. Rev. Meggin has returned to offering worship each month at the local nursing home.
- Conversation groups take place in the community, open to anyone who would like to ponder the deeper questions of life: Not Just Java is a way for folks to chat (online) about how their lives are going-- the day to day celebrations and concerns. Formally and informally, we meet and study and share God's presence.
- Now that restrictions have eased, we are able to offer our facilities to community groups such as 'Art 4 Adults,' which meets every Wednesday morning. Our new, improved sanctuary is a prime venue for any sort of music or dramatic arts'

presentations. If you haven't had a chance to see it, you should come in and check it out! We're open every Sunday morning.

- In the wider world, we give to a wide variety of Mission and Service projects, supporting work from digging wells to promoting gender rights, highlighting indigenous issues; from helping groups that offer pre- and neo-natal health care, to helping recovering addicts, locally, nationally, and internationally.

In all this work, one thing becomes apparent: In order to share God's love in our world, we need financial support. If you are already an active supporter of St. Paul's, let me extend to you our sincere thanks and gratitude. Every bit of help you give-- be it time, talent, or treasure-- is a way of spreading love near and far.

If you have not been a regular supporter of our work, may I take this opportunity to encourage your participation? The work we do is an expression of our faith in God's love: the love that reaches out to all, in good times and bad. We are called to be the hands, feet, and voice of Jesus in our world, and your contributions help make that happen.

In this season of resurrection, as we watch in wonder as the world is re-born in so many ways, we look forward to nurturing the growth of our church family, and, in turn, our community and the wider world. With your help, we can make good things happen. Your offering, combined with God's power, presence, and purpose, mean that we can do "infinitely more than we can ask or imagine."

Please join us: in worship, in conversation, in praise and care and concern. Please, join us as we try to be a light in a sometimes dark and hurting world. Please join us, in supporting St. Paul's life of faith.

Blessings to you this Easter season.

Rev. Meggin Hare