



# St. Paul's Church

422 Market St.

Box 1551, Camden,  
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## Ascension and Seeing

**When His visible Presence was withdrawn from men's sight, what was left as the fruit of His Ministry? Not a formulated creed, not a new body of writings in which a new philosophy of life was expounded, but a group of men and women who found themselves knit together in a fellowship closer than any that they had known, and who became the nucleus of the whole Christian Church. As the fellowship expanded, it drew within its bounds people of every type, every nation, every social class. And they found that so far as they were loyal to its inner purpose and submitted themselves to that Spirit by which its life was constituted, all that separated them from one another became unimportant and negligible.**

William Temple  
*Christian Faith and Life, 124-125*

In this time approaching the Ascension and the Day of Pentecost, at a time when the world we greet each day seems more broken, I have been thinking about Temple. He was Archbishop of Canterbury during the Second World

War and, although he died before the war's end, he thought and wrote about how the lives of ordinary men could be improved after the end of hostilities, not simply as the result of public policy but as the fruit of the Holy Spirit working in and through the machinery of government and the lives of those developing a new social contract. He was irrepressibly hopeful, even in the darkest days of conflict, and stands as one of the great advocates of the work of the Spirit in our common life.

If Easter is about finding Christ in the unexpected place in our lives together, the Ascension and all that follows it is about how it directs our us in the way we see our world. Rowan Williams, one of Temple's successors as Archbishop of Canterbury, puts it in helpful way, at least for me. Prior to the Ascension, Jesus was *what we saw*, especially among the forgotten and the oppressed. After the Ascension, Jesus becomes *the way we see*, the lens through which we are able to observe and bear witness to our world. We become more attuned to the things in our world that need our attention, our willingness to bear witness

to the lives of people of color and the wealth gap, the evisceration of voting rights, the collapse of confidence in our civic lives through the presence of the Spirit in our lives, constantly pushing us toward a vision of equity in the way we regard one another.

Temple was not blind to the forces that work against such a vision. He worked and lived in a world that was either recovering from or preparing for war. But where others saw inexorable forces promoting distrust and division, Temple saw and preached hope, even when many of his fellow clergymen had abandoned it. Neither was he naïve about obstacles that stood in the way of the love we should bear for our neighbors. He simply saw in his world the successors of that "group of men and women who found themselves knit together in a fellowship closer than any that they had known." Within the context of that hope, he felt there was nothing we could not accomplish. At a time when our siloed worlds seem increasingly inviting, we could use a vision like Temple's, one that searches our best selves at our darkest moments.

--Fr. Mark

## Annual Parish Picnic

St. Paul's congregation is invited to attend

### The Annual Church Picnic

When: Memorial Day

Monday May 30th, 1pm - 6pm

Where: Red Bank Battlefield Park  
100 Hessian Ave.  
National Park NJ.

St. Paul's will supply the meats (Chicken, hamburgers, hotdogs and rolls).

Please bring the sides. eg. salads, deserts, fruit, watermelon, corn, mustard, mayonnaise, ketchup, cheese

Water, ice, aluminum foil, charcoal, matches, lighter fluid etc. Things we tend to forget.

--Betty Fletcher

### May Birthdays

May 1st : Sandy Sanders

May 5th : Alex Ibeneche

May 10th: Matthew Stokes

May 19th: Nathan Smith

May 20th: Kingsley Ibeneche

May 31th: Andrew and Ashley Stokes

Congratulations to all!

## Books

Although I am still catching up on pre-pandemic reading, Richard Rohr's *just this* (2018) is a book for those who want to find a way toward contemplative practice in a world that keeps impinging on our daily lives. He says it is "a book about seeing, but a kind of seeing that is much more than looking because also includes *recognizing* and *appreciating*." It is a short book of meditations on contemplation; Rohr's emphasis is that it should not be onerous, one more thing to do in our already full days. It is about waking up to the world and appreciating in its wonderful ordinariness.

Reading the book and entering into some of its suggested practices is a good way to see the small things of our world in gratitude instead of being overwhelmed by things and events we cannot control.

-- Fr. Mark

## Deacon's Corner

Last month, I attended the Habitat for Humanity conference in Atlanta, Georgia. This was the first in-person conference I've attended in nearly a decade, and certainly the most folk I've been around in at least that much time. There were thousands in attendance, all with the same goal in working to improve the quality of neighborhoods, address urban blight and gentrification, home repair for aging in place, and for aspects addressing safe and affordable housing.

One of the workshops I attended had to do with zoning laws. I learned about the history of discriminatory zoning laws, that governments, federal on down, developed, know as "redlining:"

In 1933, faced with a housing shortage, the federal government began a program explicitly designed to increase—and segregate—America's housing stock. Author Richard Rothstein says the housing programs begun under the New Deal tantamount to a 'state-sponsored system of segregation.

The government's efforts were 'primarily designed to provide housing to white, middle-class, lower-middle-class families,' he says. African Americans and other people of color were left out of the new suburban communities—and pushed instead into urban housing projects.

Rothstein's new book, The Color of Law, examines the local, state and federal housing policies that mandated segregation. He notes that the Federal Housing Administration, which was established in 1934, furthered the segregation efforts by refusing to insure mortgages in and near African-American neighborhoods—a policy known as 'redlining.' At the same time, the FHA was subsidizing builders who were mass-producing entire subdivisions for whites—with the requirement that none of the homes be sold to African Americans."...npr.org: 'A Forgotten History of How the US Government Segregated America'

We heard further in the workshop about how deeds were specifically written in order that upon sale, houses could not be sold to people of color, Asians, or Jews, further limiting the dream of homeownership. This served as background. We also learned about how communities are addressing these lines and barriers. In Montgomery County, Maryland, for example, the R-1 zoning has been eliminated altogether, allowing the space for more housing and more affordable housing within what had been these redlined areas.

We heard about a new community in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where an entire block was re-envisioned, making room for a child care center, a new high school, single family homes as well as transitional housing, work and living units, a dental clinic, a community center, and a park.

Another Habitat affiliate fight back in California against the "Not in My Backyard" sensibility to create a step-by-step program to first address their un-homed population to transition to transitional housing with the hopes in those community members becoming Habitat homeowners one day.

Much more work needs to be done. We have examples, finally, of where these barriers, these edges, deeds re-written to eliminate discriminatory language.

In our scripture reading for this coming Sunday, we will read about Paul's inclusionary words, welcoming the Gentiles into the fold of God's beloved community, this, a community without any redlines.

--Rev Jeannie

# Bishop Search Timeline

Having received several questions about the timing of the process for calling a new bishop, I thought I would include the official version from the Diocese. —Fr. Mark

**January–April 2022:** Information Gathering-

Gathering Input from Around the Diocese

**Feb 14, 2022:** Diocesan Survey Opens

**March 8, 2022:** Diocese Survey Closes

**Mar 8–Mar 22, 2022:** Report creation and interpretation

**Late March 2022:** Diocesan Listening Sessions

**April 18, 2022:** Applications Open; Diocesan profile is published

**May 9, 2022:** Application Deadline/Nominations close

**May–October 2022:** Discernment Process; Review of applications, interviews, background checks and discernment retreat

**Late October 2022:** Slate of candidates is announced; Petition candidates are accepted

**Early January 2023:** Diocesan Meet and Greet; Opportunities to meet the full slate, comprised of Committee Nominees and, if applicable, Petition Nominees.

**January 28, 2023:** Special Electing Convention

**June 24, 2023:** Ordination of the 13th Bishop of New Jersey

