



The Road to Damascus

September, 2015



A (Not Really) Farewell to Libby Wade

In a period of transition, an Interim Priest-in-Charge plays a vital role in the life of a parish. This was certainly true of the Rev. Libby Wade, who ably served St. Paul's from the beginning of 2015 to the arrival of Sam, our new Priest, in August.

As Interim Priest-in-Charge, Libby not only led regular worship services, but she and Jim organized a very successful Bible study program. She provided much-needed support and guidance to church leaders, and proved to be a champion organizer!



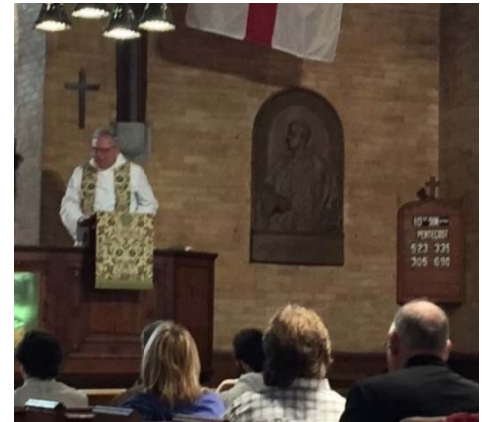
More on page 2.

Welcome, Sam Smith!

With great joy St. Paul's Church welcomed our new Priest-in-Charge, Sam Smith, on August 2. Sam immediately proved himself to be a man of many talents, including the first-ever, from-the-pulpit "selfie" in St. Paul's history. More to the point, he projected a personal and powerful preaching style, as well as a warm and welcoming presence.

The mood of the parish was one of excitement and anticipation as we look forward to refining and strengthening the mission of St. Paul's.

Sam and Don have settled well into the Rectory and seem to enjoy living there. We look forward to a long and productive relationship.



Here is Sam's first message to the parish:

I feel so blessed by the welcome I have received from all of you, and by your enthusiasm for our future together. I am struck by the deep love you have for St. Paul's, and your commitment to one another and this church. It is a joy to get to know you, as well as this great community.

In meetings with parishioners, as well as various community leaders, I have witnessed an infectious passion for life in the Berkshires, and a strong commitment to work in partnership with other community members to make this place even better. It seems to me that these passion-filled partnerships are also the key to building up the St. Paul's community.

See page 3.

Letter From Libby:

Dear People of St. Paul's,

When I began work at St. Paul's back in January, you and I were strangers. Over the course of the seven months I served as your Interim Priest-in-Charge, we began to get to know each other as we worked, played, and worshipped together regularly. Now Jim and I count many of you as friends, and it is hard to contemplate not being a regular part of the life of St. Paul's.

We are both grateful for the welcome you showed us, but the role of an Interim is to engage quickly, support the life of the congregation, prepare the way for the settled priest, and then move on when the time is right. I am particularly thankful for your responsiveness to the ministry we shared. Now it is time for me to leave, so that Sam has ample opportunity to settle into his new role as your Priest-in-Charge. Your parting gifts to Jim and me were generous and thoughtful. The brunch on July 12 provided good camaraderie, and we look forward to using our season tickets to the South Mountain Chamber Music Series in September and October.

After a trip south to visit friends and family, participate in the Jonathan Daniels' Pilgrimage (google him to read the story of his martyrdom in my hometown), and enjoy the Alabama Gulf Coast, I'll be busy much of the fall serving a Sunday supply priest around the diocese.

I have enjoyed getting to know Sam as our time overlapped in July and am confident that together you will develop a new sense of mission and an increased positive momentum in your shared life of worship and service. May God bless you and guide you as your spiritual journey continues with new leadership!

With peace and hope for God's future,
Libby+

Although, as Libby points out, she will take on new assignments in the fall, she and Jim are just down the road in South Lee and we hope to see them from time to time here at St. Paul's. If you want to stay in touch, here's her contact information:

The Rev. Elizabeth Wade
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270-519-6934 (cell)
libby_wade@yahoo.com



Sam's Message (*continued from p.1*)

Our faith calls us to support one another in our common life. In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians he employs the metaphor of the church as a body, made up of different parts that work together for one purpose. He says, "The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part... If one part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt and in the healing. If one part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance." (1 Corinthians 12:25-26, as paraphrased in *The Message*, a wonderful resource for biblical study.)

In the coming months, as I continue to meet new people and learn more about the Southern Berkshires, I will discern with our parish leadership the best opportunities for us to support one another and our neighbor—to become more involved in mission and outreach. I am certain that this work will not only demonstrate our love to the community, but will also make us stronger as a parish.

I am praying that together we will find exciting new ways to embody Christ for our community and one another. Will you add this petition to your prayers too?

Sam+



A Very Big Day is Coming on October 24!

With friends from area churches, St. Paul's will welcome Bishop Doug Fisher as he formally celebrates Sam's ministry. It's more than a cake (left from Sam's first Sunday) – it's our formal welcoming of Sam to the Western Massachusetts Diocese and to our parish.

Plan to come to this Celebration of New Ministry on **Saturday, October 24 at 10:30 a.m.** at St. Paul's. It will be followed by a festive reception at the Stockbridge Town Offices.

From our Senior Warden:

As summer ends, Paul's Church can look back at spring and summer, 2015, as a time of celebration and new beginnings. In April, the efforts of the Profile and Search committees culminated in our call to a new Priest-in-Charge, the Reverend Samuel J. Smith.

In July, we said goodbye to our wonderful interim priest, Libby Wade, and her husband Jim. We also said farewell to Pete and Jenny Lilienthal, our Rectory tenants. Not to worry, though, Jenny remains our crackerjack office manager. Further, St. Paul's will also continue to be home base for the Wades.

Libby's accomplishments are actually too numerous to mention, but here are a few: Libby held weekly Bible Study groups, set up a children's table in church, led noonday worship in our church garden for Bishop Doug Fisher's Berkshire Corridor visit, officiated at the baptism of Adrian Teal, created a beautiful red ribbon mobile for Pentecost Sunday, organized the upstairs spaces in the Parish House and in numerous ways helped us prepare for the arrival of our new Priest-in-Charge, Sam Smith. We are so grateful to Libby!

August 2 was Sam's first day to celebrate services with us. On that beautiful summer morning, over seventy friends and parishioners attended and gave a heartfelt welcome to Sam and Don. In the fall, there will be a church supper offering another chance for everyone to get to know them better. On Saturday, October 24, at 10:30, Bishop Fisher will come to St. Paul's for a Celebration of New Ministry. You can expect a joyful service with beautiful music and festive participation.

Highlights of the past few months include:

- St. Paul's participated in Cathedral in the Night, offering food and prayer opportunity in downtown Pittsfield.
- Organist Gabi Makuc provided us with lovely music, including flute playing by Erin Pulley during Nancy King's vacation.
- Our summer rummage sale was coordinated by Jodie and Scott Camarind who have agreed to chair the Events and Community Awareness Committee.
- The Maltzoff Project was started by Mary Maltzoff to gather diapers and support for the Berkshire Diaper Project from residents and staff at Riverbrook.
- Many parishioners wrote welcome notes to Rev. Sam Smith, introducing themselves. Sam would still appreciate such notes.
- We welcomed several new folks to church including Deborah Pege; Don Cooke; Ginny and Doug Wilcox, Sebastian Bonner and Anne Auberjonois; Marina Duque and her husband Stephan Mulvihill; and Jolanta Lorenc.

From my point of view, the renewal and blessings we are currently experiencing at St. Paul's feel wonderful! Thank you for your positive energy and commitment to each other and to St. Paul's Church.

Vaunie Graulty

Bishop's Pilgrimage Stops at St. Paul's

On May 26, Bishop Doug Fisher's diocesan pilgrimage made its way to Stockbridge. The trek through the Berkshires from north to south was the last of three such journeys through the "corridors" of the diocese that were designed to bring the Bishop closer to the churches and communities he serves.



In an interview in Stockbridge with NPR station WAMC, Bishop Fisher explained why he decided to walk through the many communities of the sprawling diocese. "I'm always urging our churches to take the faith to the streets," Fisher said. "Faith isn't something you just live in that church building, but you bring it out into the world. So, on this walk we do prayer services on street corners and in parking lots."

Bishop Fisher visited the St. Paul's Children's Center and participated in a service in the Memorial Garden with parishioners and Interim Priest-in-Charge Libby Wade.

"The Episcopal Church theologically is a church that believes very much in an incarnational expression of faith," Rev. Wade said. "Jesus Christ being the epitome of that. So we do have a concern for the environment and for people in the here and now not just salvation in the by-and-by or Heaven far off. But a new creation here on Earth and his walk I think is a powerful symbol of that. It sets an example for us that he wants to be the church incarnate out on the streets, highways and in the fields."

Among those participating were Kendra MacLeod, who walked from Lenox, and Vaunie Gaulty and Jim and Libby Wade, who walked the route toward Great Barrington. Others who supported the pilgrimage included Michael Cosby, who supplied a new weather-proof banner to lead the Bishop, Carla McCormick, Lisa Thorne and Jean Rousseau.



Capital Campaign Update

The first phase of the capital campaign raised a total of \$81,842 in pledges and grants of which cash receipts were \$44,842.

We applied for and received a \$4,000 Congregational Development grant from the Diocese and the proceeds are due by August. These funds will supplement the Evans and Organ Reserves. To date, we have invested the receipts by significantly upgrading and improving our electrical service and replacing the furnace and thermostat in the church -- this resulted in a 30% savings in heating costs despite the extraordinarily cold winter.

The other two major expenditures of the CC funds received to date are for restoring the Musgrave windows on either side of St. Paul which should be completed by the fall and a new life giving repair to the tower clock which now keeps regular time for the first time in a decade!

A Grants Committee has been formed to explore other grant opportunities particularly related to historic preservation. We hope to report good results by early next year and will then kick off a campaign to gather matching funds. Anyone interested in participating in the Grants Committee should contact Vaunie Graelty.



Preparing for rainy days?

St. Paul's Needs You!

There are many opportunities to help the church in its mission. Are you interested in participating in services? If you would like to be crucifer, Eucharistic Minister, intercessor, greeter or do offertory or hospitality, please email the office or speak with Sam. You will receive training so don't let a lack of experience stop you.

We also need folks who can contribute to the newsletter as writers of feature stories and photographers of regular church events and special occasions.

The food pantry also needs volunteers, including a team to coordinate a program to raise money to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables during the cold winter months.

Dates to Remember

Saturday, Oct. 10: Rummage sale, 10:00 – 3:00.

Saturday, Oct. 17: Vestry meeting, 8:30.

Sunday, Oct. 18: Fall clean-up, after the 10:00 service.

Saturday, Oct. 24: New Ministry Service and reception, 10:30.



Sam's view from the pulpit during his first sermon