



St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Delray Beach, Florida  
The Conversion of St. Paul (transferred) - January 28/29, 2012  
Acts 26:9-21; Ps. 67; Galatians 1:11-24; Matthew 10:16-22  
**The Rector's Address to the Parish** - The Rev. Canon William H. Stokes

### **St. Paul's and the Five Marks of Anglican Mission**

*"... for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you..."*

Acts 26:16b

On this last Sunday of January at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Delray Beach, we traditionally observe our patronal feast, the Conversion of St. Paul. The feast of the Conversion of St. Paul actually falls on January 25, but churches are permitted, by custom, to celebrate their patronal feasts on the Sunday following the given feast day. So, that is what we are doing. And it is a weekend of celebration for us.

We hold our Annual Meeting, the children are entertained by a wildlife show, and, this evening, a lot of us will get together for our Festive Meal at The Delray Beach Golf Club and have a lot of fun and fellowship to celebrate the year that has been and to kick-off the year that is to be! We owe great thanks to Margo and Tommy Vuicich and their committee, who have organized this for us. They do an amazing job year after year and I know it will be a wonderful night when we can all just be together.

The sermon this morning takes the form of the Rector's Address to the parish. To those who are visiting, I hope you will hear in this the story of an incredible and extremely vibrant church community carrying on the missionary vision of our original patron St. Paul, who is second only to Jesus himself in the growth and development of the Christian Church. We are being faithful both to St. Paul's spirit and apostolic energy and, above all, to his devotion to Jesus Christ and his Gospel and to the spread of the Kingdom of God.

This past week, the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Katharine Jefferts Schori, sent a video message to all of the Deputies who will serve at the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, which meets for eight days this summer in Indianapolis. The General Convention is the governing body of our democratic Episcopal Church. I have the honor and privilege of serving as a Clergy Deputy representing the Diocese of Southeast Florida.

In her message to the Clergy and Lay Deputies, our Presiding Bishop was urging us to prepare for a major structural "re-orientation" of the Episcopal Church. This structural re-orientation involves a radical break from the "top-down command and control model" which has dominated not only our Episcopal Church, but also most mainline churches and most traditional profit and not-for-profit corporations in American life. The Presiding Bishop is urging us to

prepare ourselves for a more nimble and responsive Church focused on mission – a Church that is “looking forward and outward rather than inward and backward into our history.”<sup>1</sup> “The Church doesn’t have a mission,” she said in her video address to the Deputies, “God’s mission has a Church.” *The Church doesn’t have a mission; God’s mission has a Church.*<sup>2</sup>

Presiding Bishop Jefferts Schori recalled for us the “Five Marks of Anglican Mission” that had been circulated around the wider Anglican Communion and which were adopted by the 2009 General Convention. These **Five Marks of Anglican Mission** are:

1. **To proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God.**
2. **To teach, nurture and baptize new believers.**
3. **To respond to human need by loving service.**
4. **To seek to transform the unjust structures of society.**
5. **To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.**<sup>3</sup>

“As we look at the Episcopal Church,” the Presiding Bishop stated, “it is clear that the lively and growing parts of the Church are the ones engaged in mission.”<sup>4</sup>

“Our task,” she said, “is to remember who we are and to recover our identity as the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society.”<sup>5</sup> Did you know that was the official name of the Episcopal Church – the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society?<sup>6</sup> Yes, each one of us, you and me, clergy and laity alike, are missionaries. We are those called, like St. Paul himself, to proclaim and spread the Good News of the Kingdom of God.” “... *for I have appeared to you for this purpose*” Jesus said to St. Paul during the knock-down, flash of light event of Paul’s conversion on the famous Damascus Road... “*I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you...*” (Acts 26:16).

Jesus says exactly the same words to us who are St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Delray Beach. “... *for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you.*” It’s about mission...mission and ministry... And you know what? At St. Paul’s Episcopal Church we know that! We are all about that.

When I consider the Five Marks of Anglican Mission approved by the 2009 General Convention and referred to by Katharine Jefferts Schori in her address to General Convention Deputies earlier this week, I am struck by the recognition that St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Delray Beach is engaged in serious and deep ways in all five of those areas.

**First Mark: To proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God.** We are first and foremost a worshipping community that proclaims the Good News of the Kingdom of God through prayers, through music produced by **Dr. Keith Paulson-Thorp** and our incredible choir, and through faithful preaching of God’s Word. Not only do we proclaim the Gospel, we strive to live it.

No matter who you are - rich, poor, black, white, Asian, Hispanic, young, old, in recovery, not in recovery; down on your luck; or prosperous and happy – when you come onto the St. Paul’s campus you are treated with dignity and respect. That’s living Kingdom of God values. That’s what the Church is called to do and to be. This Church’s *raison d’être* is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I am especially excited about our re-commissioning St. Paul's Chapter of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, which has as its particular focus the proclamation of the Gospel to men and by men and through men to children and youth. I look for wonderful things to come out of this ministry and, as I did last week, I again urge all of the men of the parish, of every generation, to get involved with it. If one of the Brothers invites you to a meeting, say yes. This ministry is a wonderful complement to our ministry of the Daughters of the King, which has been active among the women of St. Paul's for many years.

**Second Mark: To teach, nurture and baptize new believers.** You will find few churches that are as proactive in the ministries of teaching and Christian formation as St. Paul's. This is all about proclaiming the Gospel. Through our many programs for children, youth and families under the leadership of Susan Stokes, through our Bible Studies and our two Education for Ministry groups, through our Foundations classes, which are especially appropriate for "new believers," to our 20/30s Seekers Group, which represents our response to a changing demography, St. Paul's teaches, nurtures and baptizes.

I take delight in the fact that, on any given Sunday, we will celebrate a baptism, and you, the people of St. Paul's, don't hesitate. You have become so familiar with the service that it is no longer an occasional and odd event. It is, in fact, a normal occurrence for us. That's a good thing. It's a mark of mission. We also confirm and receive a large number of adults each year – as we will again this coming February 19<sup>th</sup>, when Bishop Said joins us for an Episcopal visitation.

We are teaching and forming Church. Teaching makes disciples and disciples engage in mission. I don't want us to be a Church of consumers of religion. I have never been interested in that. I am not interested in that now. I never will be interested in that. We're not called by God to be that. I want us to be a Church of disciples of Jesus Christ witnessing and serving. That's what we're called to...There's a huge chasm between those two identities.

**Third Mark: To respond to human need by loving service.** This past week, two dozen St. Paul's members hosted three homeless families through Family Promise. These families slept in temporary quarters prepared for them upstairs. Volunteers from St. Paul's slept here each night as their overnight hosts. The families ate meals prepared by members of our parish. St. Paul's adults played with children to give parents a break.

It is a wondrous thing to watch the loving service that takes place during a Family Promise week. Special mention needs to be made of Nancy Armstrong and Zee Bissell who have served as Family Promise Coordinators from the very outset of this project and worked tirelessly in this ministry, and we need to express our profound appreciation to them and also to the new Coordinators who have come on board – Julie Hagnauer, Kate DePuma and Linda Boyd.

Or, come by any day and watch Gary Shusas, Jeannie Fernsworth and our IWLE (I Want to Learn English) team work with the stream of people, mostly Haitian immigrants, who come here every day, burning with a desire to learn English so they can thrive in this country and realize the American Dream.

Then there's Paul's Place. Kathy Fazio has built on the work begun 13 years ago by Joyce Harvey and continued by Mary and Allen Whittemore. Every school day 30 children and youth, from the immediate community, mostly Haitian-American, all "at risk," come for after-school tutoring and help. We started Paul's Place because of the outrageous drop-out rate in this community. Today, eleven Paul's Place kids are in college!

If you want to think about human need and loving service, think of our Stephen Ministers, who take time to console and help in the healing of those who are hurting or in grief.

They are under the supervision of Meta Barton. I am also thankful that Ben Usher went to Orlando a couple of weeks ago and took the Leadership Training Course and is now a part of the Stephen Ministry Leadership Team at St. Pauls.

Our Lay Eucharistic Visitors are also key to how this parish responds to human need and engages in loving service. Members of this dedicated group bring the sacrament to those who are in nursing homes or homebound and can't get to church.

These are ministries of tenderness, of compassion and care. In a society so focused on the individual, the church continues to uphold the value and importance of community. As I often like to remind us: the Church is the only place left in our society where four generations gather regularly to support and care for one another. We are vitally important to sustaining community life.

**Fourth Mark: To seek to transform the unjust structures of our society.** The church has a prophetic role. We, all of us, are called to recognize and name the inequities and injustices that are so pervasive in our world and in our lives. We cannot pretend the inequities and injustices don't exist; they do, and they are corrupt and evil and compromise us all.

For more than ten years, this Church has served as a support and advocate for the Roscoe Campbell Family. The United States Immigration Court System is a broken system. In 2005, Roscoe was treated horrendously by the court, presided over by a judge who was arrogant and rude and who, because of his arrogance, could not adjudicate Roscoe's case fairly. His lawyers were not intimidated by the judge and filed a complaint against the judge for professional misconduct.

The complaint was reviewed by the Justice Department, and the judge was found to have "engaged in professional misconduct when he acted in reckless disregard of his obligation to be fair and impartial."<sup>7</sup> As a result, his decision and deportation order in Roscoe's case were overturned and the whole thing was sent back to the beginning.

A final hearing took place this past fall and we are waiting for the new Judge's decision, which should come out any day. Please keep Roscoe and his entire family in your prayers. They have endured incredible agony through this tortuous ordeal.

Through our participation in PEACE, a Palm Beach County community organization, we are fighting for a wage-theft ordinance in Palm Beach County. This is opposed by the Florida Retail Association and other powerful lobbyists.<sup>8</sup> It's shameful.

Every day, immigrant workers and those down on their luck are ripped-off. Most business people are honest with their workers and do the right thing, but there are those who take advantage of the weak and vulnerable, like the landscaper who hired a group of day laborers and drove them from South County up to Tequesta each day to work. He said he'd pay them at the end of the week. On Friday, he drove them up; they worked. At the end of the day, he said he was going to get some beers for them because they'd done such a good job. He left them and didn't come back. He might as well have left them in China. It's outrageous. Where should the church stand? The Church should always stand with the weak, on the side of justice, to transform unjust and inequitable situations. That's what we're doing.

**Mark Five – To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and renew the life of the Earth.** Almost exactly three years ago, Mary Whittemore was elected to the Vestry. Prior to that time, we had not been particularly focused on environmental concerns as a church or on our own environmental stewardship. These issues are, however, a passion of Mary's and she began to make us all more aware of our role as stewards of the planet.

Under her leadership, we formed the Green Team, which began to engage in a variety of activities. They increased our level of recycling on campus, called upon us to look at our carbon footprint, began to put weekly stewardship/environmental awareness notes on the bulletin board and in the weekly bulletin, and looked at renovation projects we were doing to assure that we were using, as much as we were able, materials that were environmentally responsible.

They also planned an annual observance on or about Earth Day, which has usually involved a meal offered using locally grown organic food. Last year's was spectacular.

This coming May, under Mary's leadership, the Green Team is sponsoring a "Green Faith Fair" that will involve other houses of worship and community organizations as well as vendors and not-for-profits that encourage environmental responsibility.

The Reverend Fletcher Harper, an Episcopal priest and the Executive Director of the organization Green Faith, is helping us to organize this community-wide event and will be with us that weekend as our guest preacher.

So you see, the Five Marks of Anglican Mission are clearly visible in the on-going life and ministries of St. Paul's Church.

I want to come back to Mary Whittemore... I cannot say enough about her leadership as a member of the Vestry and, this past year, as Senior Warden. A year ago, when I asked her to serve as Senior Warden, she asked me, "Am I old enough to be Senior Warden?" I answered her, "If I'm old enough to be Rector, you're old enough to be Senior Warden!"

Her service to Christ and this Church has been spectacular. From the time she helped us get Paul's Place off the ground in those very early days twelve years ago, through her work as a Godly Play Teacher in our Church School, through her passion and leadership of the Green Team, to her drive this past year to see that the Annual Operating Budget was funded as well as we were able, and, especially, toward this end, to the work that she, Joanne Grubman and Jane VanGigch did in making our first major Fund Raising Special Event, the Car Raffle, a huge success with a net gain of \$38,000 for the church, Mary has been a model lay leader, vestryperson and warden. **Because of her dedication, passion, service and leadership, I am naming Mary Whittemore St. Paul's Volunteer of the Year and this year's recipient of the Bishop's Award for Distinguished Lay Service.** She will receive that award in February, when Bishop Said is with us. I am deeply grateful to Mary and we all should be. She has had an amazing impact on the life and leadership of this church. Thank you, Mary!

In stepping down from the Vestry, as the diocesan canons require, Mary is not stepping down from leadership. I am very thankful that she has agreed to serve, along with Deborah Phelan, as one of the Financial Stewardship Co-Chairs for this next year.

Both Mary and Deborah were herculean in their financial stewardship work this past year, and it paid off. We finished this year with the smallest negative position we have had in many years – a deficit of just over \$41,000 on a budget of \$1,042,000. When we began the year, we were looking at a \$200,000 gap between income and expenses, so the result is definitely a major accomplishment and worth celebration and accolades!

Along with Mary Whittemore, the terms of three other members of the Vestry expire with this Annual Meeting. They are Deborah Cartwright-Clough, Sandy Norman and Bill Strucker. All of them have served faithfully and well and brought unique gifts and talents to our work.

This Vestry class has had to help our Church navigate through the rocky shoals of what has been a negative economy since 2008. It has not been easy. With their leadership, we did what we needed to do while not compromising the ministries of this Church. I am most thankful to them for their dedication, faithfulness and service.

I am very pleased to announce that I have asked Christina Drouin to serve as Senior Warden in the upcoming year. Christina has been a faithful member of this parish for many years. She is a professional strategic planner and was instrumental in helping us form our first strategic plan when I first started as Rector.

The Budget we are presenting for 2012 is essentially a “flat budget,” as it has been for the past few years, with the exception of the 2009 budget, when we made drastic cuts totaling more than \$200,000.

The 2012 budget does include a very modest 2% cost of living increase for all staff, who have not received any increase – cost of living or merit -- in 4 years, even as living costs have escalated for us all.

We are blessed with a remarkable staff of most dedicated people and I want to acknowledge and thank them all: The Reverend Kathleen Gannon, our Curate; Keith Paulson Thorp, our Organist and Choir Director; Bill Hurd, our Parish Administrator; Barbara Clifford, our Parish Administrative Assistant; Susan Stokes, Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry, who also picks up a lot of the pieces in a wide range of different areas; Chris Pasquale, our part-time Youth Minister; Roscoe Campbell, our Sexton; Randy Czeh, our part-time Assistant Sexton; Ethel Kadwell, our Part-time Bookkeeper; Elaine Joy Moran, who helps us with the reception desk on Tuesdays and oversees hospitality on Sundays; Patti Daniell, Head of St. Paul’s Day School and her staff – Barbara Jackson, Diane Simpson, and Kathy Yates (by the way, Diane Simpson is now a part-time bookkeeper for us, providing Bill with much needed help in our increasingly demanding and complex operation); Kathy Fazio, Director of Paul’s Place and her assistants, Denise and Rachel Copeland; Jeanne Fernsworth, who is part-time administrator of the IWLE Lab; Shelly Seales of the Turnover Shop; and Roy Talbot, who works at the Turnover Shop but also helps us with “fix-it” work around the church and oversees our audio-visual team.

As most of you are now aware, The Rev. Dr. David Angelica is also on staff as a part-time Assisting Priest, providing us with much needed clergy support. David will be with us until May 1, when he returns to Massachusetts. He is a wonderful addition and, with his doctorate in Psychology, offers us additional strength in pastoral care. David will be offering a Lenten Series on “end of life issues,” which I will encourage everyone to participate in.

With respect to the budget, we have only increased those line items that we necessarily have to increase – utilities, insurance, fixed operating costs. There are no major programmatic increases.

Funding the ministries of this very busy and active Church that is engaged in mission, mission, mission is a great challenge. As you all now know, we are presently engaged in two major financial campaigns, both of which present all of us with an opportunity to bless the work of the church and to give thanks to God for the abundant blessings we have received and enjoy.

The first campaign is The Annual Operating Campaign to fund our projected budget of \$1,050,298. ***Funding this budget will require \$745,000 in pledges from the members of this parish.***

Concurrently, while we are engaged in the campaign to fund the Annual Operating Budget, we are engaged in the St. Paul’s Legacy Endowment Campaign: Growing in Faith; Abounding in Thanksgiving. ***The goal of this campaign is to raise \$2.75 - \$ 3 million for an endowment to strengthen and support the on-going ministries of this church.***

In the days, weeks, and months ahead, St. Paul’s “Ambassadors” will be calling upon parish members and friends to seek your support for both of these campaigns. I pray that each

and every one of you will give your most prayerful thought and care to both of these campaigns and will give to both of them as generously as you can. One is for our immediate 2012 needs; the other is for our long term needs – like checking and savings. St. Paul's has not engaged in any kind of endowment campaign for more than 40 years. It is our time and our turn to build on what we have received from others. We are doing vitally important ministry... We are doing God's work. God's work, God's mission, requires of us all our full commitment of time, talent and treasure.

I do want to assure you that the leadership of this parish is careful with your money and responsible stewards of what has been entrusted to us. After careful research, the St. Paul's Endowment Board, the Investment Committee, and the Vestry determined to place St. Paul's funds (with the exception of cash for our day to day needs) under the management of The Investment Fund for Foundations (T.I.F.F.), a highly rated management group that specializes in managing funds for foundations and not-for-profits.

St. Paul's funds are being carefully overseen and responsibly managed by exceptionally qualified and capable people both within the parish and without. I am very grateful to Jim Walton, Chair of the Endowment Board, to Gaetano Vicinelli, Chair of the St. Paul's Investment Committee, and to John Parke, our Treasurer, for their conscientiousness in this area.

You should know that we made a Property Purchase this past year. If you have ever attended an evening or nighttime event at St. Paul's, you no doubt will remember the endless game of dominoes that continued every night across the street at 130 SE 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue in the bright yellow house. We had been trying for years to buy that property. When we first attempted, the list price was over \$500,000.

With the calm, cool advice of Bob Chapin and Chris Herin, we were patient and acquired the property this past year for \$165,000. We have no immediate plans for its use; this will be determined at a later date when a broad group of parish leaders is able to have a leadership retreat and look at where we want to go and how we want to get there.

With respect to questions of financial stewardship, there come times in the life of every organization when it is necessary to acknowledge that something is not working and to make changes. As I said to you in my address a year ago, the Turnover Shop gives us a great presence in downtown Delray Beach, and the goal of using shop proceeds to fund outreach ministry has been an important one...

This ministry was begun years ago by a group of faithful St. Paul's women, who realized great success in carrying out the ministry using a model that worked very effectively in its time.

Providing funding for the Mission and Outreach of the Church is the primary purpose of the Turnover Shop Ministry. Unfortunately, despite the tremendous efforts of Shelly Seales, Roy Talbot, and an intrepid group of Turnover Shop volunteers, the Turnover Shop has not been able to operate in such a way as to make any financial contribution to Mission and Outreach in three years.. Different formulas for success have been tried; the shop was overhauled and recast a few years ago. Still, despite all these efforts, it continues to fail.

Consequently, following careful thought and deliberation, the Vestry has determined to put the building on the market with the intention that proceeds from any sale of the property will be placed in a designated fund of the Endowment. I am going to urge that this fund be called The Turnover Shop Fund, and it will honor and preserve the work of those original women as well as those who came after them. These funds will be used specifically for Mission and Outreach purposes, again to keep covenant with the original intentions of the Turnover Shop founders.

It is our hope and expectation that these invested funds will produce at least the annual \$15,000 toward Mission and Outreach that we had expected from the Turnover Shop. We will continue to operate the Shop until such time as the building is sold, and we ask everyone to continue to support it by bringing in goods and by purchasing goods. I am most grateful to Shelly and Roy for their hard work, and especially to Shelly, who has agreed to stay on with us and run the shop until the sale is accomplished.

There will be a Jumble Sale on March 1 – 3. Mary Lou McCallister is once again serving as Chair and I am very thankful for this. She is an outstanding organizer. Be sure to sign up and be a part of the next Jumble Sale. It's an "all parish" event. Last year's proceeds of more than \$11,000 went to support Mission and Outreach at St. Paul's and benefitted: Paul's Place, Family Promise, The South Florida Haiti Project, IWLE, and many more of the important ministries in which we are involved.

At and through St. Paul's we clearly evidence all of the Five Marks of Anglican Mission. How blessed we are – blessed to be Christ's people, called at this time and in this place to serve God's mission. I am profoundly grateful to be your Rector, to engage with you in this work God has given us to do. It is an enormous honor and privilege to do this ministry. Certainly it is challenging. With our patron St. Paul, I feel confident we can do all things through Christ, who gives us strength (Phil. 4:13). We have much still to do....So let's keep at it; let's keep at this mission work, God's mission... It is our deep and holy calling.

Now, unto God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit be all honor and glory now and forever. *Amen.*

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<sup>1</sup> Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori - Video Address to the Deputies of General Convention, January 26, 2012 found on the Episcopal Church website <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/presiding-bishop>

<sup>2</sup> Jefferts Schori Video Address

<sup>3</sup> See Resolution D-027 passed by the 2009 General Convention which met in Anaheim, California - [http://gc2009.org/ViewLegislation/view\\_leg\\_detail.aspx?id=981&type=Final](http://gc2009.org/ViewLegislation/view_leg_detail.aspx?id=981&type=Final)

<sup>4</sup> Jefferts Schori Video Address

<sup>5</sup> Jefferts Schori Video Address

<sup>6</sup> This designation was a part of the official incorporation in New York State in 1821. See *Wikipedia* – "The Episcopal Church" - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Episcopal\\_Church\\_\(United\\_States\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Episcopal_Church_(United_States))

<sup>7</sup> See Coyle, Marcia "Bad Behavior by Miami Judge Reverses Asylum Ruling" originally appearing in *The National Law Journal* and found at <http://www.law.com/jsp/law/LawArticleFriendly.jsp?id=1202466596652>

<sup>8</sup> See Sturrock, Stacy "Palm Beach County activists use holiday cards to deliver anti-age theft message to retailers." - *The Palm Beach Post* November 20, 2011 at <http://www.palmbeachpost.com/money/palm-beach-county-activists-use-holiday-cards-to-1981422.html> - Also see <http://www.palmbeachpost.com/news/palm-beach-county-commissioners-split-on-support-of-1392415.html?printArticle=y>