



peace be with you
weekly devotional

from the desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler
SAINT PAUL BENSON

Blessings for Rev. Stephanie

We extend blessings to
Rev. Stephanie as
her promotion becomes real.

Imagine what stories
she will tell in years to
come of her four years here!

Beginning by marching
in the Pride Parade
a first for many but
certainly not for her.

Strong singing in worship and
all around the church, even
recording Dyno Kids
song with Rev. Jerry.

A memorable year of
smiling into camera
as congregation watched
livestream from home in pj's.

Plant themes relating God's
all-inclusive love through
succulents, cacti, and palms

Continued

May 17, 2023

Ephesians 1:15-19

Paul's Prayer for the Ephesians

Since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, this is the reason that I don't stop giving thanks to God for you when I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, will give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation that makes God known to you.

I pray that the eyes of your heart will have enough light to see what is the hope of God's call, what is the richness of God's glorious inheritance among believers, and what is the overwhelming greatness of God's power that is working among us believers.

This power is conferred by the energy of God's powerful strength.

From the Desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler
May 17, 2023

In this week's lectionary readings is a letter that St. Paul wrote to the people of Ephesus. It is a blessing to some of the earliest Christians. Today we use these same words to bless Rev. Stephanie in the week she will be preaching her last sermon to this Sunday in the role of our lead pastor and a reception will be held in her honor following our 10 AM Sunday service.

We can also hear the words as a blessing for each of us. Psalm 65 as written by Nan C. Merrill provides an encouraging blessing for her, and for us, as well.

*Blessed are those who draw near to you
Those who dwell in your Heart!*

*Awaken us to your kindness, enter into
your Holy Temple,*

Our heart!

Through pain and suffering, your

Presence sustains us,

You, the hope of all the earth, and

Of the farthest seas;

Who by your Light created the mountains,

Being guided by Love;

You still the roaring of the seas

The pounding of the waves

The tumult of the peoples...

At the rise of each morning and

As the sun sets at night

*The people bow their heads in reverent
gratitude.*

Blessings for Rev. Stephanie

Erupting in laughter
at young one's antics
a lively toddler to baptize!

Dancing down the aisles
or tearing up behind
the pulpit, music moves you.

Saint Paul's Flag Corp waving
Rainbow colors while sweating
through three annual parades.

As we pray our group shalom
discover many painted
rocks encouraging calm,
a happy and peaceful life.

When we pray the Psalms, we sometimes hear the words as needed for our lives, or those we love. Even if we didn't personally know anyone who is suffering or experiencing tremendous joy, we pray the words for those who most need them.

Today we honor Rev. Stephanie and the good work she has done at Saint Paul for the past four years and pray God's blessings upon her and her husband Todd in the future.

Through times of transition, we rejoice that God's faithful love endures forever!

Marta

Rev. Marta Wheeler