

St. Paul's Church in Nantucket

The Reverend Dr. Eugene McDowell
20 Fair Street, Nantucket, Massachusetts 02554 • Telephone 508-228-0916



As I continue to be enveloped into this national and world economic and social uncertainty, I also continue to seek the mind and wisdom of Christ. As a person of faith, I do believe I am being called to be optimistic. However, as the mid twentieth century theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer observed: "The essence of optimism is not its view of the present, but the fact that it is the inspiration of life and hope when others give in; it enables people to hold their heads high when everything seems to be going wrong; it gives them strength to sustain reverses and yet to claim the future for themselves instead of abandoning it to their opponents."

Therefore, I gather from all this that true God centered optimism is "will for the future." And it should never be abandoned, even if it is proven wrong a hundred times. Our faith is not about end of time signs. Our faith is not about chaos, disorder, and catastrophe as the "last word." Therefore, as an institution of hope and promise, St Paul's, Nantucket, must optimistically continue to encourage this sense of hope and promise to those around and pray that everyone "stays in the fight" working to overcome economic and social problems. Such optimism is part of the heritage the Church has been asked to leave future generations.

I conclude by again quoting Dietrich Bonhoeffer. "It may be that the Day of Judgment will dawn tomorrow; and in that case, though not before, we shall gladly stop working for a better future. "

Let us pray for each other during these times as we each continue to seek to be the optimistic and hopeful people of God.

Faithfully,

Gene