

Saint Paul's Messenger

December 2020



*As faithful stewards of God's Grace,
our mission in Christ is to foster
community through spiritual growth, witness, and service in the Episcopal tradition*

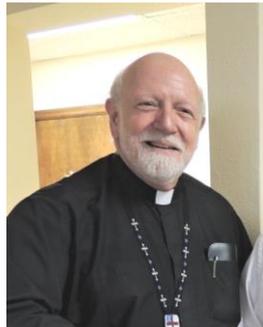
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Established 1893

Messenger Editor, Chuck Berry

Rector's Report from Fr Larry Ort

Today is the winter solstice! For the first time since 1623, the Great Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn appears in the western sky (low to the horizon) just after sunset, and the Ursid meteor shower is projected to reach its peak. Let light come!



Christmas is nearly here! I pray that you will have a joyous Christmas despite curtailed travel and family gatherings. Our Christmas Eve service will also be curtailed – limited seating, no singing, etc. We need to practice all the safety precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

2020 has been a year for the record books! As the year ends, I find myself thinking of all those who have suffered from Covid-19. Each of the 310,000 deaths in the U.S. not only represents the suffering of the one who died, but also the suffering of families and friends. And these statistics only apply to the United States. Front-line health care workers have endured, and

continue to endure, great suffering in caring for Covid-19 patients. In so many instances, they have been the only one present at the moment of death. We need to find some way to honor those who have risked their lives during this pandemic. I have recently observed a couple of posts on Facebook which advocate the forgiveness of student loan debt for health care workers. I strongly support this idea! After finishing a long, tiring shift, they catch a few hours of sleep, and are right back on the job! Let us not forget to thank our own members of St. Paul's who have served, or are serving, in the health care professions: Ellen (Hublou) Feiner, Kate Wackel, and Dr. Kenric Malmberg. We also have several public-school teachers and counselors who have contributed so much during these times: Jennifer Lacher-Starace, Mollie (Hublou) Wait, and Jason and Theresa Kratochvil. I do hope I have not overlooked anyone.

We can give thanks for the development of two vaccines which have been approved and are now being distributed. These vaccines were developed in record time due to scientific and technological breakthroughs in genetics. Even so, our lives will continue to be disrupted for the next several months.

I know that several of our members have been, or currently are, actively engaged in community service. Community engagement is one way of representing St. Paul's in the broader community. Please assist me. I would like to identify all those involved in such service. Please forward their names and details of service to me and join me in thanking them for serving the greater community. We often speak of the ripple effect of St. Paul's – I suspect we are making ripples of which few are aware.



What about a new feature in the *Messenger*? How would you like to share your faith story? This does not have to be a long, detailed

account – nothing like St. Augustine's *Confessions* (although that might make for some interesting reading!). Some prompts could include: What attracted you to the Christian faith? Why do you continue to observe faith practices? How do you see God at work in your life in ways that are slowly molding and transforming you into a new creation? Aim to keep it short – no more than a single-spaced page. Now, who is willing to be the first contributor?

Here is an interesting tidbit from the *Book of Common Prayer*: “The Minister of the Congregation is directed to instruct the people, from time to time, about the duty of Christian parents to make prudent provision for the well-being of their families, and of all persons to make wills, while they are in health, arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, not neglecting, if they are able, to leave bequests for religious and charitable uses.” Did you know that is in the *Book of Common Prayer*?

St. Paul's has an Investment Fund and an Endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund currently exists on paper but has not yet been activated as it is new and has yet to receive a significant bequest which would merit opening a special account. If anyone would like a copy of the Endowment Fund policy, please let me know.

In addition to having established a will or a trust, it is prudent to establish an advanced care directive or living will which sets forth provisions for medical care in the event of an emergency. One can stipulate they want no extraordinary measures to be employed should there be little or no chance for a viable recovery. This lessens the burden confronting families during such times. If you have not already done so, you may also wish to identify yourself as an organ donor on your driver's license when you renew your license.

May the Christ of Christmas find room in our hearts and minds. May 2021 bring new light, new hope, and a return to more normal conditions! Happy New Year!

Blessings, Fr. Larry

Vestry Minutes Dec. 14 Meeting

Rector's Report (Fr. Larry Ort): Fr. Larry verified with the treasurer that there is one payment left in the 2021 Common Mission Support. The Discretionary Expenses opening balance was \$1772.07. There was one expenditure, a reimbursement to Fr. Larry for a request for food, leaving a balance of \$1659.08. We received thank-you notes for our outreach donations from Feeding Brookings, Drug Court, and the Food Pantry.

Senior Warden's Report

(Lynn Hublou): The Youth Groups are working on a Christmas card project (senior group) and a virtual Christmas pageant (elementary group).



Junior Warden's Report (Lee Krachtovil):

Lee listed two warmer weather projects: inspecting the balcony railing at the rectory and inspecting the balcony flooring-porch roof for wood rot. He will also look at conditions under the roofing this summer.

Treasurer's Report (Bob Klein):

The treasurer's report was accepted in a motion made by Lynn Hublou (2nd, Janet G.). Discussion focused on bequests and outreach expenditures. Bob Klein was able to purchase a new \$240 software package for \$60.



There will be no meal, but the Bishop will meet with the Vestry.

Fr. Larry sent out an email entitled Visitation Questions for Clergy, Vestries, and Bishop Committees. Fr. Larry is concerned about the long-term viability of our congregation and will create a committee who would be tasked with a concerted effort to increase membership. Lynn H. commented that Fr. Chris Corbin might be a good resource, and Fr. Larry will also be consulting with the Bishop.

Fr. Larry will be inviting parishioners to share their faith stories in writing. He would also like to highlight members' involvement in civic activities in the *Messenger* and praised Chuck Berry's work with the Messenger.

The Annual Meeting was a topic of discussion in light of the pandemic. Comments included the possibility of adopting the present year's budget for next year, how to vote in a Zoom meeting, by-passing the quorum, or even postponing the meeting. Fr. Larry will get input from the Bishop.

Fr. Larry has 12 totes from Jean Lacher's garage with old documents, as well as 10-12 totes in the Rectory basement with documents that need to be sorted through for duplicates. Many historical documents were lost when the rectory flooded in 2013. Sorting and combining these documents will give us a more complete record. Bob Klein is willing to tackle Jean's totes.

Next Meeting: January 11 at 5:30 via Zoom
Meeting adjourned. Respectfully submitted,
Marsha Klein, Clerk of the Vestry

Old Business: Completion of Outreach

Allocation: \$750 of the remaining \$2900 was already committed to matching contributions to Episcopal Relief and Development. The Vestry voted on a motion made by Lynn H. (2nd Carol Ann Klug) to allocate the remaining Outreach funds in the following manner: \$430 each to the Brookings Humane Society, Salvation Army, LSS, Habitat for Humanity, and CASA. The motion carried and the treasurer will disburse the funds.

Fr. Larry has sent out the Stewardship Drive 2020 letters to the congregation, and the treasurer reports receiving 14 responses.

New Business: The Vestry discussed the Christmas Eve Service and decorations. We will gather poinsettias around the altar area,

set up the nativity scene, and hang a wreath on the front door.



St Paul's Sanctuary at Christmas 2018

The service itself will be via Zoom (as well as very limited seating in the church) and will begin at 7:30. Fr. Larry will also provide a link for the National Cathedral's services.

The Bishop's visitation is scheduled for Jan. 10 and the service will be Zoomed, again with a limited number present in person.



December Birthdays

Amanda Norgaard, Olivia Lacher Starace, George Hoffman, Maris Gehant, Jay Vanduch, Sara Woodard, Shannon Malmberg, Connie Nelson, Tonia Bogue

January Birthdays

Al Hublou, Adam Hovelson, Barbee Hovelson, Lynette Olson, Bruce Hovelson, Autumn Malmberg, Lee Kratochvil, Mary Lou Berry, James Lurvey, Elias Bonnemann, Tonja Jorenby, Gavin DuBray

December January Anniversaries

Bill and Shirley Gibbons, Mark and Patty Kratochvil, Charlie and Kay Clever

Hang the shining star (C. Berry)

If you unconsciously finished the line above with the words “from the highest bough” then you know the lyrics of a Christmas song titled “Merry Little Christmas.”



I had heard that song so many times that it became “Christmas noise” to me – until this year. For some reason, this year I actually listened to the lyrics. How appropriate the words seemed for this 2020 holiday season.

The song was written in 1943 during height of WWII. It was written for the movie titled “Meet Me in St Louis” and was a song about the sadness of moving away from a cherished home. However, music historians say that the strife of WWII was also reflected in the lyrics (400,000 soldiers died).

Some 77 years later, I say that the lyrics speak to us again as we deal with strife - the pandemic that has been lethal (300,000+ deaths), and has changed our everyday life. The song has two versions and both are meaningful today – here is the rest of the story.

The 1943 song had a line with the words “until then, we’ll have to muddle through somehow.” In times of strife, we ‘muddle through,’ as the lyric says. After the war, Frank Sinatra wanted to record the song but didn’t like the “muddle through” line so he had it changed to

“hang a shining star.” Now the song has bravado because the star gets past melancholy and muddling and is a symbol of hope and bravery.

There is another line in the lyrics that I like a lot, and I am hopeful that “*from now on, our troubles will be out of sight.*” In a few months, don’t meet me in St Louis, meet me at St Paul’s to recall “*the happy golden days of yore.*”

*Have yourself a merry little Christmas
Let your heart be light
From now on, our troubles will be out of sight
Have yourself a merry little Christmas
Make the yuletide gay
From now on, our troubles will be miles away
Here we are as in olden days
Happy golden days of yore
Faithful friends who are dear to us
Gather near to us once more
Through the years we all will be together
If the fates allow
Hang a shining star upon the highest bough
And have yourself a merry little Christmas now*

Episcopal Relief and Development: Results of St Paul’s Christmas Campaign



The total of the individual contributions to ERD) and the Vestry’s matching funds totaled more than \$5,000. This impressive demonstration of generosity surely helps meet the ERD mandate that comes from Matthew 25:37-40

*Lord, when was it that
We saw you hungry and gave you food?
We saw you thirsty and gave you something to drink?
We saw you a stranger and welcomed you?
We saw you sick and took care of you?
We saw you in prison and visited you?
‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’*



He said that we can control how we celebrate so let's do it outside of the usual Christmas box. Love doesn't stay in the manger. Look for Jesus' face in our neighbors and strangers. Love outside of our usual Christmas traditions and make a friend, change a life, and transform the world.

St Paul's sent two contributions to ERD. One amount (\$3,000) was specifically for a new water well in a needy community. The remainder was for ERD's Gifts for Life program (e.g., agriculture tools, education).

ERD says "Having safe water has a tremendous impact on daily life. With these systems in place, people no longer have to spend hours fetching water from polluted lakes, rivers and streams near their homes. Girls can go to school, and women are able to care for their families and pursue education and employment — creating a better future for themselves and their communities."

Thanks to Mary Lou and Chuck Berry for leading the program this year as we recall Doug and Connie Nelson's passion to highlight ERD as a Christmas program at St Paul's.

Bishop Visit January 10

The bishop's annual visit will take place on January 10th. If anyone would like to be baptized or received in the Episcopal Church, please contact Fr Larry.

Bishop Foltz had an unusual Christmas message for the Diocese. Watch his 3-min-long message at the following website:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P4Oj1pJHj9c&mc_cid=18fc61cc09&mc_eid=614a8708fc.

Bishop Foltz helps with the service last year.



2015 Pageant Cast. Has the famous St Paul's Christmas Pageant ever been canceled?

St Paul's during Quarantine-time

Church services in person: OPEN with seating separation, modifications in service, and other safety features

Church services on line link for Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83255248573?pwd=NXcweGIRSGxaUklRTXBqVFV0cUJlZz09>

Pledges: - use mail or in person

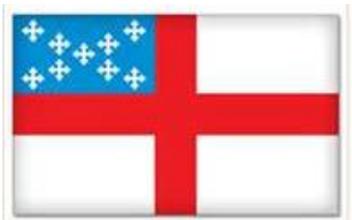
Compline: Wednesdays, 7:30; zoom

The Messenger

Newsletter of
St Paul's Episcopal Church
Church
Established 1893, Parish since 1952

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