

# *Saint Paul's Messenger*

September 2021

*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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[www.Stpaulsbrookings.com](http://www.Stpaulsbrookings.com).  
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*Established 1893*

Messenger Editor, Chuck Berry

## **Notice! Mass in the Grass**

**When?** Sunday -- September 12<sup>th</sup>

**Where:** Connie Nelson's farm, 43865  
204th Street, East of White, SD

**Pot Luck:** Bring a dish. Plates, utensils,  
napkins, and drinks will be provided.

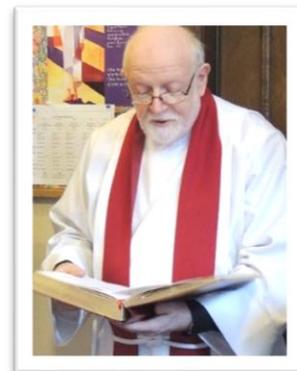
**Travel:** For carpooling, meet at the church  
at 9:45 -- we will leave at 10:00 and the  
service will begin at 10:30 or thereabouts!

**Directions:** Directions from Brookings: Take I-  
29 North to exit 140 (SD 30). Drive  
approximately 10 miles east to 483rd Ave. Turn  
right (south) and drive 1 mile to 204th Street, then  
turn left and proceed approx 3/4 mile until the  
street ends and you are on a private drive. Proceed  
up the private drive and park on the lawn,  
perpendicular to the drive.

**Message:** see article page 5

## **Rector's Report from Fr Larry Ort**

The past few weeks have flown by! Summer is over and another academic year has begun! Unfortunately, several members of our congregation are returning to classrooms in school districts and SDSU which do not have a mask mandate in place despite the fact the highly contagious Delta variant of Covid-19 is spreading rapidly. Please pray for their safety and that some wisdom would come to our legislators. I am increasingly concerned about the disregard for the common good and sound scientific evidence.



I just finished reading Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sack's *The Great Partnership: Science, Religion and the Search for Meaning*. It is an excellent read! In the chapter on morality, Sacks notes the importance of religion in sustaining social cohesion. Sacks says, "When people focus

as they naturally do, on immediate benefits, not long-term sustainability, then society begins to erode from within and there is little anyone can do to halt it” (p. 161).

Sacks says, “The signs are unmistakable” and he then quotes an author: “People lose a sense of shame. Rudeness is taken as a sign of sophistication. People pursue the pleasure of the moment. They lose respect for leaders. The young no longer defer to the old, and the old behave as if they were young. The difference between the sexes is blurred. People get irritated by the least touch of authority and they dislike any rules that inhibit their freedom to do as they like.” He then asks, “A Christian evangelical bemoaning the secularism of today?” and states, “No: Plato speaking about the democracy of Athens.” As Ecclesiastes says, “Nothing is new under the sun!” But the question remains: What will we choose to do about it?

Permit me to further quote Sacks: “A law of entropy governs societies. They rise to power and affluence and then they begin to decline as individualism saps the collective spirit that brought them to greatness in the first place. When this happens, only a countercultural force can revive flagging energies, renew institutions, defeat



Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, a celebrated moral thinker and globally renowned intellect of Judaism, died in 2020. He gained fame in the secular world and in Jewish circles; was voice on issues of war and peace, religious fundamentalism, ethics, and the relationship between science and religion; wrote more than 20 books.

cynicism, generate trust and restore altruism. The Abrahamic monotheisms [Judaism, Christianity, and Islam] are the most powerful countercultural forces the world has ever known because they speak to something indelible in the human spirit: the dignity of humanity as the image of God” (Ibid.).

If several of you indicate an interest, I would be happy to lead another book discussion group via Zoom where we could further develop and explore these ideas.

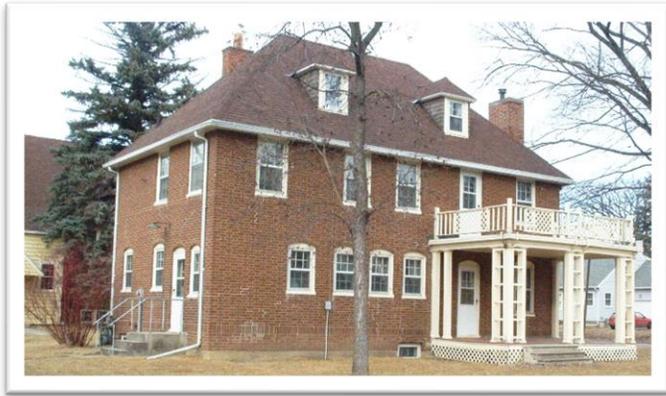
Judy and I spent a few days at the Satyagraha Institute at the Placerville UCC Camp in the Black Hills. While the scenery was beautiful, and we made some new friends, it was not a relaxing time. We were reviewing the organization’s vision, mission, goals, and long-term objectives – things I have worked with and taught for many years. I had to conclude that I have reached the “old fart” stage of my life where no credence is lent to one’s experience, knowledge, or wisdom! It was humbling, but I think I managed to sneak some things in through the back door! I did have some wonderful fellowship with a Buddhist leader who goes by the name “Gentle Dragon” and with a Jewish rabbi, Victor Reinstein.

We also managed to spend a week in Denver and Castle Rock with Judy’s sons, Pat and Andrew. We enjoyed the time, but some corroded bolts on a toilet tank presented a bit of a challenge and a few trips to Lowe’s! I spent considerable time over the toilet bowl, but none of it was due to drink! However, as I recall, completion called for a beer.

Once again, we find ourselves having to reinstate the Covid precautions – masks, hand sanitizer, and social distancing. We will also cut back some on the singing – permissible if one is masked.

I suspect most of you have heard that Judy and I are moving across the alley. We are in the process of finalizing the purchase of 721 5<sup>th</sup> Street – directly south of the garage at the rectory. It has a bedroom and laundry facility on the main floor which will make Judy’s life much easier. We have known this day would come but would like to have postponed it for a couple more years. We have enjoyed our time in the rectory; it has been a great home and we have so many good memories.

2011 photo of Rectory, note the big Blue Spruce (that corner was a junk pile, now a nice patio) no fence for back yard, no railings on porch in this 10-yr-old photo



Our leaving the rectory means the congregation must determine how we will use this space. Since St. Paul's installed the new boiler system, the utilities have been reduced to an average of \$280 per month. The Vestry has agreed we should form a committee which will consider various uses and provide some recommendations. If you would like to serve as a member of this committee, please let me know.

Last, in the past six weeks, we have conducted memorial services for Douglas Nelson, Coral Bonnemann, and Dorothy Kratochvil. These were celebrations of life and thanksgiving for their presence and many gifts to the lives of others. But as I have shared with a couple of you, the longer I stay here, the more difficult the job becomes. Know that we love you!

Blessings, Fr. Larry



### **September-October Anniversaries**

Donald and Amanda Norgaard, Kenric and Shannon Malmberg, Fr. Larry and Judy Ort, John and Lynette Taylor

### **September Birthdays**

Doug Carruthers, Nicholas Laidlaw, Judy Ort, Archer DuBray, Stephanie Lacher, Rick Bogue, Caedman DuBray, Susan Laidlaw, Michael Starace, Phyllis Peterson

### **October Birthdays**

Shirley Christiansen, John Whalen, Ismael Pallares, Kevin Bogue, Elsie Carruthers, Paul Gillespie, Marsha Klein, Pete Peterson

### **St Paul's Services**

**Sunday services in person at 10 AM:** OPEN without seating separation but please wear masks. Singing yes, and communion (without the common cup), no coffee talk recently.

**Wednesday Eucharist** 1:30 Thorburn Hall

**Wednesday Evening Youth Services:** on summer vacation

### **St. Paul's Vestry Minutes August**

**Approval of Minutes:** The July 12 minutes were approved in a motion by Lynn Hublou (2<sup>nd</sup>, Lynnette Taylor).

**Rector's Report (Fr. Larry Ort):** Fr. Larry reported that the Satyagraha Institute conference in the Black Hills was "an experience."

We received a thank-you letter from the Bless Annual Appeal (Episcopal Development) for St. Paul's contribution.

A meeting of PFLAG will be held in our courtyard on Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>.

Fr. Larry will send a thank-you note to the Kratochvil family for the bequest from Dorothy Kratochvil's estate.

**Discretionary Expenses:** opening balance was \$1686.55. Disbursements included \$80 for a rental deposit, two reimbursements to Fr. Larry for transportation (\$112.99 and \$72.99), \$31.80 for auto parts, and a deposit of \$285, leaving a current balance of \$1673.77.



**Senior Warden’s Report (Lynn Hublou):** The kitchen clean-up will be held in Thorburn Hall on Tuesday, Aug. 31<sup>st</sup>. Lynn will call a meeting of the Church School teachers to make plans for the coming year. The Vestry

discussed the status of Wednesday night get-togethers in light of the Delta Variant. They decided to continue twice-monthly potlucks on the patio as long as the weather holds. In September, we will hold potlucks outdoors on Sept. 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.



**Junior Warden’s Report (Lee Kratochvil):** Fr. Larry reported the quote from Satterlee’s cleaning service. In a motion made by Lynn H. (2<sup>nd</sup>, Carol Ann Klug), the Vestry

voted to approve a one-year contract for \$300 a month for cleaning following each Sunday service. **The whine in the ventilation system has been repaired.**



**Treasurer’s Report (Bob Klein):** Bob K. provided a January-July 2021 report, which was accepted in a motion made by Lynn H. (2<sup>nd</sup>, Janet Gritzner). He noted that the Wealth Management account is up \$30,000 since the beginning of the

year.

**Old Business:** The Vestry revisited the COVID protocols and decided to resume masking and social distancing in the church and return to remote services as well. We will continue with music. Fr. Larry and Jay Vanduch will look at upgrading our equipment and may decide to try Facebook Live as an alternative to Zoom.



**Old and New Business: Reports from Chuck Berry** Chuck Berry spoke to three items. The first was that he had picked up three donated bookcases from Peggy Miller, the placement of which has yet to be determined. They could

be used to house historical books relating to St. Paul’s, as well as other books.

*Second*, Chuck displayed the modern version of a 50- gallon rain barrel, which the Vestry agreed to place in the corner behind the hydrangea bush in our courtyard. Its purpose would be to provide a passive watering system for the surrounding plantings, act as an educational device for the National Cathedral Committee and give us points to be designated as sacred ground in the future.

*Third* The proposed border fence on 6<sup>th</sup> Street was Chuck’s third topic. He noted that with COVID-related cost increases, the project is getting out of hand. The Vestry thanked Chuck for his diligent search for options and bids, and they opted to table this discussion for further study.

The Vestry met with a representative from AA and agreed to welcome the group to use Thorburn Hall as a new meeting place on Wednesday evenings from 7:30 to 8:30. This will begin in October. Privacy is the main concern of the group, and St. Paul’s will do its best to insure that.



Fr. Larry visited with Samantha Turnquist from the Salvation Army, who appreciated the questions after her presentation during the church service. The Vestry will continue to discuss a possible partnership with this group.

Father Larry and Judy have purchased a home on 5<sup>th</sup> Street, around the corner from St. Paul’s, and will be moving sometime in October. The Vestry decided to form a sub-committee to discuss options for the use of the Rectory going forward.

**Next Meeting:** September 20<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marsha Klein, Clerk of the Vestry



## Mass in the Grass (by Chuck Berry)

For the past few years, St Paul's has had one outdoor Sunday service; we call it "Mass in the Grass" although I've heard the joke about us worshipping "*au naturel*."

We've met in state and city parks, in parishioner's back yards, and this year we'll look over a farmstead in the "White Hills."

The content of the outdoor service is essentially identical to the indoor one, except that we don't focus on the stage (the altar) that is so beautifully arranged by the Guild. Instead, we focus on our surroundings in what I call "The Natural Cathedral" that has itself been so beautifully arranged.

The idea is that by being outside, we will become aware of God's creation, and affirm that we are in and of nature.

Scholars say that the greatest accomplishment of the outdoor service is to draw us into a Christian ecological vision of creation as revelatory of the presence of God. Such a vision can lead to an examination of our relationship with the world in which we live, and move us from an "I-it" to an "I-Thou" relationship with the creation entrusted to our care. Wow! That's a big mission for one service in a farm yard!

In the past outdoor services, I have raised my hand during the "Call for Announcements" and have very briefly reminded the congregation of why I thought we were outside. First, without our buildings, we see that the church is really us - the people. Second, we can also appreciate our good fortune to have shelter, food and other comforts to return to next Sunday. Third, meeting outdoors might make us mindful of the Natural Cathedral's construction, its ecological relationships and the diversity of life.

The third point takes some mindfulness and perhaps some instruction – in some occasions I've even mentioned the ecological services that trees give us (yawn!). But, this year, one photograph dominates my thinking. In 1969 the world recalled man's first steps on the Moon and we often saw one photo taken by the astronauts called "Earth Rise." The photo showed a beautiful blue and white and green planet floating in the blackness of space and contrasted with the barren, bleak surface of the Moon. The contrast might be like the Biblical wandering in the desert versus living in the land of milk and honey.



In the Natural Cathedral, we can be dazzled by the colors and patterns - from the gold of the goldenrod in an expansive prairie setting to the blue skies and puffy white clouds drifting of the heavenly skies above. And, the scene can astound us as it changes with sunlight, weather and the seasons. I have called it the tapestry of nature. A tapestry has diversity and a tapestry is interwoven.

There is a connectedness between the earth, plants and animals, and us as dependents and stewards. Where else in the cosmos can we see and be a part of such a tapestry? Earth – God's Garden. Surely Creation Care is a moral obligation and a religious concern.

Our current art display sponsored by the Visual Arts Ministry is a visual trip from the cosmos to Earthly images. We see images that represent each day of creation. The center image is a painting of a South Dakota landscape that takes the viewer from the vast cosmos (the moon in the stary heavens) to a child's eyes gazing in wonder and curiosity at captured lightening bugs.

### The Creation:

- God made it and owns it,
- God loves it and cares for it,
- God reveals himself through it,
- the Creation provides us opportunities for worship and witness,
- we share Creation with others and with future generations,
- we are dependent upon the Creation,
- we are stewards of the Creation (God has no hands but our hands)

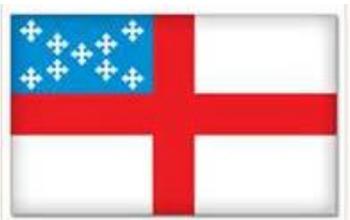
# *The Messenger*

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

## *Inside the September Messenger*

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**Mass in the Grass  
Sept 12**



**Saint Paul's Episcopal Church**  
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Brookings SD 57006