

Saint Paul's Messenger

December 2018

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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Messenger Editor, Janet Gritzner

December Birthdays/Anniversaries

1	Amanda Norgaard
6	Olivia Jean Lacher-Starace George Hoffman
9	Mavis Gehant
11	Winnie Baker
13	Doug Strong
14	<i>Bill & Shirley Gibbons</i>
15	Jeff Jorenby
18	<i>Mark & Patty Kratochvil</i>
22	<i>Charlies & Kay Clever</i>
23	Jay Vanduch
25	Sarah Woodard
26	Shannon Malmberg <i>Doug & Sueellan Strong</i>
29	Connie Nelson
30	Tonia Bogue

From our Rector - Fr Larry Ort

Happy New Year! Church year, that is. We closed the Church Year with Christ the King Sunday, so we now begin Year C of the Lectionary. Nearly every commercial establishment is pushing Christmas and has been doing so for the past few weeks – it seems like the business world rushes the season more each year. That is one of the reasons I appreciate Advent, for Advent invites us to slow down and contemplate the coming of Christ. Throughout the Advent Season we are reminded of the importance of

Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Today I received an e-mail from Fr. Ron Rolheiser which contained some reflections on hope. His words remind us that hope is grounded in God's promise:

Hope is not based on whether the evening news is good or bad on a given day. The daily news, as we know, is better on some days and worse on others. If we hope or despair on the basis of whether things seem to be improving or disintegrating in terms of world events, our spirits will go up and down like the stock market. Hope isn't based on CNN, or any other network.

Hope looks at the facts, looks at God's promise, and then, without denying the facts or turning away from the evening news, lives out a vision of life based upon God's promise, trusting that a benevolent, all-powerful God is still in charge of this world and that is more important than whether or not the news looks good or bad on a given night (Ron Rolheiser, "Advent Hope").

We live between the First and the Second Advents; we wait patiently for the fulfillment of God's promise. We are called to live in Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Let's observe a worshipful Advent and guard against the frenetic pace of the season by finding a few moments each day to engage in stillness, prayer, and meditation.

If you have not already sent your pledge card in, I encourage you to do so before December 10th. This will enable the Vestry to better forecast for 2019.

I have asked the Vestry to consider engaging in another Mutual Ministry Review. We have agreed that we will make this an item of discussion at the Annual Meeting. As you may recall from the review conducted shortly after my arrival in 2014, Mutual Ministry Review is a time for the congregation to ask, “How are we doing?” It is a time to celebrate what has been done well and to consider how we might do some things even better. It is also a time for us to prayerfully consider who God might be calling us to be and what God might be calling us to do. Please begin thinking along these lines and feel free to engage others in conversation about Mutual Ministry Review.

Our middle school and high school youth would like to lead us in Evening Prayer or Compline on Sunday evenings during Advent. This is a good way to step away from the hectic pace of Christmas and to find a few moments of peace. It is also a great opportunity to support the spiritual growth of our youth. I encourage you to come, quiet your hearts, and support their efforts.

May you have a joyous, meaningful Advent!

Fr. Larry



Senior Moments

By Lynn Hublou, Senior Warden



Fig.1. Lynn Hublou in her “senior moment”

When I was a little girl, like most children, I looked forward to Advent and Christmas with great eagerness. This time of year meant a break from school and I could be at home, my haven; it meant decorating the house from stem to stern; it meant all kinds of baking and eating of goodies; it meant presents to shop for and wrap; and it meant, of course, the reason for Christmas, Jesus’s birth. For me, another meaningful part of anticipating Christmas included playing and enjoying Christmas music. One year in early November when I was about ten, my best friend and I sat down with a book of carols and began singing some of our favorites. My mom, hearing us, admonished us, telling us it was too early, that we needed to wait until Advent before we could break out the Christmas music. Greatly dismayed, we put the book away.

As we know, though, even this is incorrect. Advent is the time of waiting, and we really should wait until Christmas to enjoy Christmas music. Be that as it may, ever since then I have dutifully opened the box of Christmas CDs when Advent begins and not before. The lesson my mom taught me wasn’t harsh, and it wasn’t intended to be. I know she meant that some things are done intentionally and thoughtfully, not whimsically. Advent is for just that. It invites us to reflect on much—who we are, who we are to

each other, and most importantly what the birth of Jesus means to us and Jesus's role in our lives.

Our reflections often include in what ways we reach out to others, how to be good stewards. St. Paul's outreach extends in a number of ways not always apparent. However, one method of outreach is to St. James, Enemy Swim. I've lost track of the number of years we've remembered the children of St. James through our Angel Tree, at least twenty-five. The Angel Tree may well be up in Charlie's Porch when the Messenger goes to press, and we'll again have a chance to pick an Angel from the tree and lovingly choose a gift for that child. We know, though, that those kids aren't the only ones we have the opportunity to reach out to. Sadly, need is everywhere.

It doesn't take much to remember the excitement of Christmas so many of us experienced as children, that sense of pure joy we recognize in the children we know and love. This Advent and Christmas season, may our hearts swell with joy in the role we each can play to recreate that, sharing with others the excitement of celebrating the birth of Jesus in whatever way we can. And for all, may that sense of peace and joy extend well beyond the holiday season.

November Vestry Minutes

Guest: Tasi Barondeau gave details for a proposed Twelfth Night party for the MS and HS youth. Included were some activities that would lead up to such a celebration. It was moved and carried that a cap of \$100, which would come from the line item Christian Education, be designated for the party.

Rector's Report (Fr. Larry Ort):

- St. Paul's received a thank-you note from Take Back the Night for our participation.
- The Secretary of State's Annual Report has been filed.
- ERD Christmas Campaign is underway.

- Fr. Larry attended Isiah Brokenleg's installation in Watertown.
- Discretionary Expenditures totaled \$320, leaving a balance of \$139.75. The Vestry has decided to tighten up the policy to limit the use of these funds to one-time emergency requests.

Senior Warden's Report (Lynn Hublou):

- The Hospitality Committee will hold planning meetings once a month at the Pancake Breakfast to plan for upcoming events.
- The Annual Meeting will be held on January 27, 2018.
- Lynn, in response to a suggestion by treasurer Bob Klein, brought up the SD Day of Giving on Nov. 27, during which Larson's will double contributions to a list of local organizations. After discussion by the Vestry, it was moved and carried that St. Paul's donate \$200 each to Food for Thought and to the Salvation Army, for a total of \$400.

Junior Warden's Report (Fr. Larry Ort):

- Fr. Larry reported that work on the chimney base, painting of the south-east basement walls and exterior wall repair in the southeast corner of the Rectory have been completed. The north basement wall is next.

Treasurer's Report (Bob Klein):

- Bob presented the treasurer's report for the first 3 quarters of 2018. The report was accepted with thanks in a motion.

Old Business:

- The Stewardship Drive/Pledge Form was mailed on 11/20/18. Responses are trickling in.
- Security Quotations: Fr. Larry met with Jay Vanduch, who suggested that we purchase a digital video motion system from Costco, which Jay will help set up. The cost is approximately \$300. A motion was made and carried to that effect.
- Jean Lacher reported on her efforts to secure Vestry nominees before the Annual Meeting.

New Business:

- We received a letter from the Diocese requesting an annual pledge of \$13,430. Our present pledge is \$14,185. A motion was made and carried Jean that our pledge remain \$14,185.
- Former parishioner Barb Murra has generously offered a gift of a Waterford crystal "Twelve Days of Christmas" pedestal cake stand. A motion was made and carried that we accept this gift with gratitude; the cake stand will be housed with the rector.
- We will not pay for a listing in the Yellow Pages, which runs \$396 for 6 months.
- The annual Housing Allowance Resolution was tabled to the December meeting.
- The stove in Thorburn Hall is having element issues. Fr. Larry will contact Ohm's.
- Fr. Larry would like to have a mission review, which hasn't been done since his

first year at St. Paul's. The purpose would be to ascertain additional direction from the congregation. He will put something in the Messenger to be brought up during the Annual Meeting.

The next meeting of the Vestry will be December 17th at 5:30 pm.

Annual Cookie Exchange

by Lynn Hublou

This year's cookie exchange will be on Thursday, December 13, at 7:00 p.m. at Lynn Hublou's home, 616 7th St. Marsha Klein will serve as co-host, making her delicious traditional meringues. Bring 3-4 dozen cookies to share. This event has been ongoing for decades, and it is a wonderful tradition to enjoy. Every year we begin with a little libation and conversation, followed by singing "Silent Night." After that, we enjoy Marsha's meringues topped with strawberries and ice cream, and the evening concludes with each person selecting a few cookies from each of the platters. Please come if you can!

Creation Care Thoughts at Advent

by Natural Cathedral Committee

Evergreens and wreaths: Evergreens and wreaths have great Christmas symbolism. Evergreens are ever - green, ever - alive, even in the midst of winter. They symbolize the everlasting life brought through Jesus. The circular wreath represents eternity, for it has no beginning and no end. It represents the circle of life. A wreath made of evergreens symbolizes growth and everlasting life. The holly and mistletoe wreath (see figure) is special because the sharp leaves are thorns, the red berries are drops of blood, and the mistletoe is love.

Advent wreath:

Episcopal Relief and Development

by Mary Lou and Chuck Berry



The circular wreath reminds us of God's eternity and endless mercy, which has no beginning or end. The green of the wreath speaks of the hope that we have in God, the hope of newness, of renewal, of eternal life.

Again this year ERD, through a generous group of donors, is able to match gifts up to \$700K.

Advent candles: Candles symbolize the light of God coming into the world through the birth of His son. Advent is not as a festive time, but is a quiet time when we look at ourselves. A part of our lives that is often ignored is our responsibility for the stewardship of Creation. Let's imagine the Advent candles shedding light on that part of our lives.

St Paul's has participated in this program before and were able to raise a significant amount of money.

Solstice: The shortest day of the year is celebrated by many cultures, so let's think about a new light coming into the world and the birth of the spiritual sun within us, which can be a time for personal awakening about how we care for The Creation.

Rob Radtke, President and CEO of ERD, says, "In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells his listeners, 'You are the light of the world. The Holiday Match provides an exceptional opportunity to be that light and to amplify the life-changing impact ERD and our partners are creating together.'"

Manger Scene: In recent years, St Paul's youth have added many kinds of animals in our manger scene. Why? Psalm 96:11 says "let the field be joyful and all that is therein." What is in that field? The animals! Fr Larry says "All animals might not have literally been present at the Manger, but in a sense they were present – and they were singing a new song!"

The Holiday March benefits the Global Needs Fund, supporting such projects as microloans and training to empower women, community health programs, and disaster preparedness and response efforts both domestically and overseas.

New Year's Resolution: Members of St Paul's Natural Cathedral Committee often end the old year somewhat weary of working on such a big issue as Creation Care. At our first committee meeting of the New Year, we will read James for this: *What good is it...if you say you have faith but do not have works?*"

Let's band together as a congregation to amplify the "world ripple" in our outreach program. You can donate by putting a check made out to ERD in the collection plate anytime this month. Any donations made before December 31, 2018 are eligible for the match.

If you wish, you can donate over the phone (1-855-312-4325), by mail (ERD, Box 7058, Merrifield, Va 22116-7058), or through the "Gifts for Life" catalogue order form (available in Thorburn Hall).

Please give generously to this worthy charity.

PS: ERD has a 4-star rating by Charity Navigator, which reports that 84% of funds raised go to the programs and services it delivers.

Imagine: Earth Created 11 Months Ago

By Chuck Berry

Message: Man has used scientific wisdom to learn how we came into being and religious wisdom to learn why. Science describes what is, religion describes what ought to be.

The Story: The New Year will arrive at midnight, December 31. Let's imagine that about a year ago, on January 1, 2018, planet earth was formed in our solar system. Lets imagine the next 4.6 billion years compressed into the days of 2018 (this ignores two-thirds of cosmic time).

In the early months of the year, the Earth took form and over the next 11 months simple cells formed and evolved into fish that fill the oceans and into vascular plants that cover the land by December 1.

Between Dec 5-7, the great swamps with vegetation that formed today's fossil fuels existed, but on Dec 8th a mass extinction wiped out 95% of all species.

Dinosaurs rule between Dec 13 – 26 when the Black Hills make up the western shoreline of a great inland sea that covers the northern Great Plains, but on about Dec 27-28, the dinosaurs disappear, thus giving mammals an opportunity.

On the morning of Dec 31, the first hominids evolve in East Africa. At 10 minutes to midnight Neanderthals spread throughout Europe.

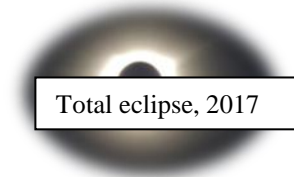
Christ will be born ten seconds before midnight. Two seconds before midnight, we enter the modern industrial era and begin to burn the fossil fuels. The human population increases

greatly and is self-conscious about its role on Earth.

On January 1, 2019, our compressed-time imagination will put us in the Anthropocene Epoch in which the human species has a significant impact on Earth's ecosystems. We now determine the earth processes that once determined us. For example, most rivers are dammed, most land is plowed, the weather and oceans are changed, and another great extinction of species is occurring.



In the Anthropocene we will be crucial to the further flourishing of the Earth. **For nature to flourish** we need to tend God's Garden understanding that we are embedded in it. *God has no hands but our hands.* **For humanity to flourish** we need to follow the Golden Rule.



December Events

St. Paul's Cookie Exchange – Dec 13, 2018 – 7:00 pm – Lynn Hublou' house – 616 7th St., Brookings

Christmas Pageant – Dec 16, 2018 – 4:00 pm
St. Paul's Episcopal

Christmas Eve Choral Sing – Dec 24, 2018 – 7:30 pm , St. Paul's Episcopal

Christmas Eve Services – Dec 24, 2018 - 8:00 pm,
St. Paul's Episcopal