



Dear Friends,

There is a wonderful book by Barbara Brown Taylor called, “Learning to Walk in the Dark.” She is an Episcopal priest and a renowned preacher. If you ever get the opportunity to hear her speak, you should take it.

I have found myself quoting from her, to others, and to myself, quite a lot in recent weeks. Here’s one: “Endarkenment is never going to appeal to anyone the way enlightenment does—well, except maybe the people who are already sitting in the dark, thinking they have done something wrong, that God has abandoned them, that they have lost their ways and may never find them again. To hear the gospel that God dwells in darkness might save them on the spot, along with any of us who are listening in—because if we haven’t already been there, we will be, by and by. No one who follows Jesus gets a rain check. No one who is human gets to bypass the dark cloud.”

You’ve all heard the line that the bad times provide necessary contrast for the good. I don’t really believe that. But I do believe it necessary to insist on the presence of God in the most desperate of places. Even in Epiphany as we sing about “this little light of mine.”

I have said to you that my trip to Jerusalem turned a lot of things inside out in my head, heart and spirit. The most complicated idea of all ideas is that the Holy of Holies belongs in Jerusalem, in the most convoluted and uncharitable of places. Or that peace emanates from the most conflicted place on earth. And yet I think that is precisely what Paul means when he points again and again at the cross and says, “Look at this foolishness. I will preach nothing but Christ, and him crucified.”

It’s not an easy lesson, not the sort of understanding that we take easily to heart. But more and more I find, when life carries me towards dark places, I expect to find God already there.

Your friend in Christ,
Michael

Vestry News

Hello from your Vestry's new Sr. Warden. I am very humbled and honored to have been considered for this position! I am looking forward to working with the new Vestry and with all of you! The 2017 Vestry has already met, and has established three main goals for the year, and they are:

- 1) Repair the painting on the south side of the church,
- 2) Begin repairing the pipe organ and run a fundraiser to help with the repairs,
- 3) Work toward expanding the children's ministry.

I am planning to meet with all of St. Paul's various groups or at least with the current leaders of those groups. It is very important to establish an open line of communication, and I am looking forward to visiting with you about your questions, concerns, or ideas. If you can't catch me at church, you can reach me at the following:

(Home) 507-451-8597

(Cell) 507-390-4236

(E-mail) 77vw@charter.net

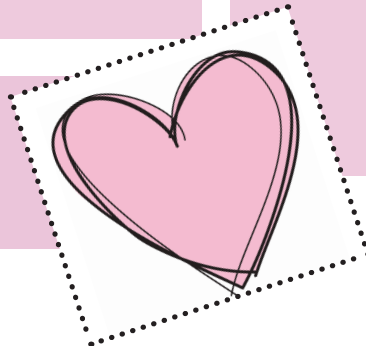
Blessings,
Gary Johnson

The Vestry Retreat will be
at Shattuck — St. Mary's,
at the Inn and Chapel on
Saturday, 25 February.

REUNION FOR
OWATONNA
TEC CREW
WEDNESDAY
15 FEB
6 PM

*"Love is patient,
love is kind."*

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4



Stone Soup

**Sunday, February 26
immediately
following the service**

Please bring one soup-worthy item to the kitchen prior to the service. The "stones" will be boiling in the pot, awaiting your delectable contributions. You don't want to miss this delicious treat!

Love in Action

On Mondays and Fridays from 1-3 the lay pastoral team is at Church to be available to those who need help on those days when we are not usually open.

If you would like to be involved (no qualifications necessary) please speak to Franci, Mary, or Mike or call 507 451 5319.

"Love does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs." 1 CORINTHIANS 13:5

Are you from here, or did you start out somewhere else?

There are a number of us who began this journey in a different brand of Christ's church. Maybe you are such a one and would now like to know more about what you have got yourself into.

Come meet some of your companion travelers and get some answers to common questions about the Episcopal church. Wednesday, 15 Feb at 6 p.m. Bread, soup and an hour of good company. Please call 507 451 5379 to say you're coming.

Lay Schedule

Date	Lay Reader	Lector	Chalice	Ushers
Feb 12	Jackie	Gary	Janet D	Mike and Gary
Feb 19	Kristin	Leanne	Mike	Terri and Marty
Feb 26	Julianna	Mark	Steve	Julie and Gayle
Mar 5	Scott	Nan	Diane	Steve and Sheryl
Mar 12	Jackie	Mary	Janet	Mike and Gary
Mar 19	Kristin	Gary	Mike	Terri and Marty
Mar 16	Julianna	Leanne	Steve	Julie and Gayle

Coffee Committees

February

Myrtle Brittain
 Lisa Boutelle
 Judy Erk
 Ann Henjum
 Sue Mahlman
 Sharon Tamburro
 Bobbi Otteson
 Joanne Peterson

March

Gail Plathe
 Janet Dixon
 Kristin Warehime
 Carol Peterson
 Nan Gjerdahl
 Jody Ruehling
 Terri Hottman
 Deb Carlson

Altar Guild

February

Janet Dixon
 Joanne Peterson
 Steve Judd

March

Myrtle Brittain
 Lisa Boutelle

*"Love always protects, always trusts,
 always hopes, always perseveres."*

1 CORINTHIANS 13:7

LEAVEN is published monthly to keep the people of St. Paul's informed and united in thought.

This issue of LEAVEN is made possible by the efforts of:

Fr. Michael Tippett
Kristin Warehime

Got News?

**If you have an item for
The Leaven, please have it to
Kristin Warehime by the fifth
of each month.**

kristin.warehime@charter.net

For more information on events at St. Paul's, visit our website: <http://stpauls-owatonna.wikispaces.com>



Saint Paul's
The Episcopal Church
in the City of Owatonna

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