



*For He saith to the snow,  
Be thou on the earth.*

*Job 37:6*

Dear Friends,

What a wonderful Christmas it was at St. Paul's: worship was truly lovely and so was the service; by which I mean your service to others throughout the season, not just the 50 individuals and families fed with Christmas baskets, but in the ways in which several of you stepped forward to help others, sometimes in ways that felt quite risky. Thank you for taking the gospel seriously.

The Annual Meeting is next week. With some formality we will adopt a budget and elect a governing body. It makes me wonder if this is what Jesus expected the Gospel to look like 2,000 years on. And yet it seems inescapable. There has to be some structure to support ministry. Not to simply maintain the building (though that is part of it). Not to ensure faithfulness in our teaching and worship (though that is part of it too). But the first priority for this structure is to sustain and nurture a community that grows closer to God and serves God's world. Those things can get lost.

As I write it is almost exactly 25 years since the Rev. Steve Judd was ordained deacon. In the Episcopal Church the deacon's role is often described as the bridge between church and the world. There are other obligations too, to do with serving at the altar and teaching. For several years Steve was responsible for all the deacons of the Diocese, their ministries and formation. But the most important role of all is as an example in ministry, especially with the poor and disadvantaged. Those of you who know him will have seen how he goes about this ministry simply and consistently. I have from the beginning admired the quiet humility of Steve's service — by day the Federated VP, his alter ego something completely different. I know Steve has struggled with the dichotomy, and I hope he won't mind me describing it in these terms, but I want you to be conscious too of the necessary courage, commitment and humility without which the gospel will not be heard.

Steve is absent this Sunday, so won't be too embarrassed by this. Our Second Sunday collection is in his honor and I hope you will be generous. He has asked that the funds raised go to Rachel's Light, the next iteration in Owatonna of faithful people providing shelter for homeless families. If you remember your gospel, especially this year's gospel of Luke, you shouldn't be too surprised that the poor, the disadvantaged, the children and their struggling parents are the Deacon's first choice.

*Your friend in Christ,  
Michael*

## *Recycle Batteries and Ink Cartridges*

We will start collecting and recycling all small batteries for your convenience at St. Paul's. This includes non-rechargeable batteries, such as size A, AA, AAA, C, D or 9-volt disposable alkaline batteries and rechargeable batteries, such as those containing lead, mercury, nickel or cadmium.

We are aware that non-rechargeable batteries can be thrown in your trash, but we will also collect these for you. We will have a small container in the lower level by the coat rack (outside the daycare room) for you to dispose of spent batteries. Our plan is to recycle the batteries at Batteries Plus which is one of a couple places committed to recycling old batteries properly, for a minimum charge.

Our second recycling opportunity is to recycle your used ink cartridges. Crisis Resource Center of Steele County will recycle the cartridges. This is one of their fund raisers. Last year they collected enough cartridges to earn about \$1000.00. They will accept any type of cartridges and have active programs with other churches and businesses in Owatonna.

FYI- light bulbs can be recycled at Lowe's as well as the compact fluorescent but not the long tube fluorescent bulbs. These fluorescent bulbs contain mercury and need to be recycled safely. Ace Hardware will recycle your fluorescent bulbs for \$1.00 apiece. Some other places that accept fluorescent bulbs are: Owatonna Public Utilities, Retrofit Company and Batteries Plus. There may be a small charge for the fluorescent bulbs.

\*There are other stores in Owatonna that also want to help us Go Green. We will have more information in the future. When you are at your local stores, you might notice what they are doing to Go Green. Let us know so we can share it with St. Paul's!

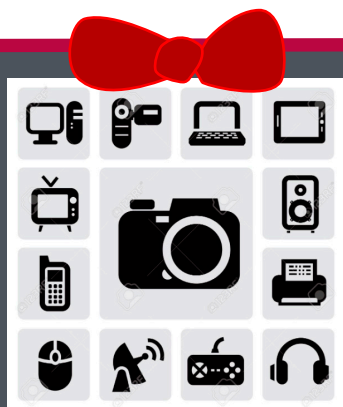
Thank You,

St. Paul's Green Team

Gail Plathe, Kris Warehime, Diane Spitzack and Joanne Peterson

Did you receive some new electronics for Christmas and are now unsure what to do with your old ones? Click the link below to learn more about Best Buy's recycling policy.

<https://www.bestbuy.com/site/recycling/recycle-faqs/>



# *Cleo's MEWSings*

Hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and your New Year is starting just purrfect! Wasn't the Christmas Eve service lovely! The music was great, the church was full and singing Silent Night with all the candles was a lovely ending. You may not have seen me but I was in the entrance enjoying the snacks!

Lots of families gathered over the holidays and were in church on Christmas Eve. Can't name everyone but have to comment on the Buerman family. All the kids and grandkids were home for Christmas from all over the country and to celebrate With Harry and Judie on their 50th wedding anniversary. Congratulations!

Many generous people contributed to the Christmas food baskets this year. Thanks, Rebecca Krug was heading it up. We were able to help 15 families with baskets of food and gift cards. Also a big success was St Paul's first Cookie Walk. So successful that it will be back next year! Hear the bakers at St. Paul's have a bit of a reputation thanks to the bake shop at the bazaar.

Some of our ailing members are slowly getting back on their feet. After a setback with a cold, hear Julianna is having tryouts for her next stint as director of Merlin Players. Even triple bypass can't keep her down for long! Can't keep Maggie Dixon down for long either. She was back in Church on Epiphany after having surgery on December 27th for a "kink" in her kidney. Wishing them continued recovery.

And speaking of Epiphany, did you see the great picture of Myrtle and the ring. She was the lucky finder of the ring in a piece of cake and has the joy of providing next year's cake. And do all of you know that the tradition of putting the ring in a cake on Epiphany goes back a long time at St. Paul's? The inscription inside the ring is "Epiphany 1876"!

Looks like 2019 is going to be a very exciting year for two of our families and for the rest of the congregation, too, because we just love babies and we don't have that many of them.

Katie (Parsons) and Edwig Vyncke are having a baby in late spring. Little Isaac will have a new brother or sister. And Gloria and Andy Simon are having their first baby this summer. Hope that isn't a secret, Gloria and Andy!

The Ostlunds were back in Georgia to see grandson William graduate from Airborne School as a Combat Engineer with Wings! (He got those wings by jumping out of planes!). He is at Fort Bragg. Keep him and all our service men and women in your prayers.

We have had other travelers that I heard about. Judy Erck has turned into a snow bird and flew off to Texas. And Jackie Warehime flew off to Hong Kong and China to study design for a couple weeks!

That is all the news I have! Don't miss the Annual Meeting on the 20th. Lunch provided by the Vestry! See you there.

Send me your news!!



## Vestry 2019

Each year at the Annual Meeting we elect new members to replace those whose terms have concluded. Any member in good standing may be elected. Traditionally the current Vestry proposes a slate of candidates to the Parish, and this year those people are:

Jody Boisen, 3-year term

Judy Erck, 3-year term

Andy Simon, 3-year term

Mark Krug, 1-year term as Junior Warden.

There will be a vestry retreat on February 2 at the Cathedral in Faribault.

The first vestry meeting of 2019 will be February 21.

**The Annual Meeting is January 20 immediately after church.**

**Lunch will be provided.**

## Church News

### HELP WANTED

Cleaning help is needed at church. Hours are flexible, this is a paid position. Please contact Fr. Michael, Gretchen, or Julie if you or someone you know is interested. Also, thanks and blessings to Nikki for her faithful service cleaning for the last 18 months or so.

### DO YOU HAVE A THRIVENT POLICY?

Do you have a Thrivent Life Insurance policy? If so, you can do 2 action projects per year per policy. Each action project receives \$250 to be used to better the community. Contact your insurance agent for more information. This was how we received \$250 toward our Christmas Basket Project in 2018

### LENTEN LUNCH SPEAKERS

Are you interested in helping to plan speakers for Lenten Lunches? Contact Fr. Michael or Gretchen for more information.

### SECRET PALS

Do you have a Secret Pal? if so, please be sure you are giving them some attention. If you started the program with good intentions but life intervened, please let Rebecca know you no longer want to participate.

### FILE CABINET NEEDED

Kathy is looking for a 2- or 4-drawer file cabinet to hold choir music. Since it will be in a closet downstairs, it doesn't matter what it looks like.

*"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Phillipians 4:13*



# Senior Warden Report

Gratitude begins in our hearts and seeks expression in acts of kindness.

January is the time of year where many of us make resolutions to better ourselves. One change that I have consciously made for 2019 is to live my life with a grateful heart. I remind myself daily of things I am grateful for: my family that I am related to, my church family, a safe place to live. Every day gives me the opportunity to reflect and to show my gratitude in different ways.

St. Paul's Owatonna is a place that many of us are grateful for. We all show that we are grateful place for this in many ways. We give baked goods, food for the pantry, prayers, and financial support. We also give time ushering, polishing brass, preparing the altar, mowing

the lawn, doing dishes, and singing in the choir. The thought of making a list of all of the ways that people give their time to St. Paul's seems like a difficult task, and for this I am grateful.

Our little church has the motto "A Visible Sign of God's Love". Members of St. Paul's show God's Love to our community by sharing the gift of their time and resources with numerous non-profits and people (and pets) in need. We give generously on Second Sunday's to those in need even when there are things that our congregation could use the money for instead. We put others first, and that is how it should be. The most important way we show our gratitude for this place and each other is to continue to be a visible sign of God's love in our community.

## 2018 Food Baskets

Thank you to our St. Paul's community! On December 22, we honored the legacy of Mike Gjerdahl and others and continued the delivering of food baskets to those in need. Fourteen members of our community gave of their time to assist with building and delivering the baskets.

We made and delivered 14 food and toiletries baskets that served over

50 individuals. Our community was very generous in providing \$1400 in donations and in-kind supplies. We were also the fortunate recipients of a generous gift from Gretchen's parents (Virginia and Terry Anderson) of \$250 worth of food. This gift served as the foundation for our baskets.

Thank you to everyone!  
Rebecca and Mark Krug

# Lay Schedule

Date	Lay Reader	Lector	Chalice	Ushers	Counter
Jan 20	Scott	Steve	Diane	Pete and Maggie	Kristin
Jan 27	Mark	Matt	Francy	Julie and Gayle	Mark
Feb 3	Kristin	Marion	Maggie	Gretchen and Marty	Gretchen
Feb 10	Nikki	Mary	Janet	Terri and Mike W	Julie
Feb 17	Scott	Francy	Diane	Steve and Sheryl	Francy
Feb 24	Mark	Steve	Francy	Pete and Maggie	Mark
Mar 3	Kristin	Matt	Maggie	Julie and Gayle	Kristin
Mar 10	Nikki	Marion	Janet	Gretchen and Marty	Julie



If you make a schedule change,  
please leave a message on the church phone.

## Coffee Committees

### January

Judie Buerman  
CO-CHAIR NEEDED  
Gretchen Zinsli  
Kari Gigstead  
Kelly Karstens  
Robin McKey  
Francy Hall  
Angie Parsons  
Terri Hottmann

### February

Myrtle Brittain  
Lisa Boutelle  
Judy Erck  
Sharol Tamburro  
Bobbi Otteson  
Sue Mahlman  
Joanne Peterson  
Jody Boisen

## Altar Guild

### January

Robin McKey  
Betty Kristo

### February

Joanne Peterson  
Janet Dixon  
Steve Judd

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

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For more information about  
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[www.stpaulsowatonna.org](http://www.stpaulsowatonna.org)  
or join our Facebook group,  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church—  
Owatonna.

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