

I am grateful for what I am and have.

**My thanksgiving
is perpetual.**



HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Dear Friends,

Advent is here, almost. It would be traditional at this point to complain about premature Christmas music and the trees and lights in stores, but I find I am not so bothered by them. It's almost as though people just can't wait for something they know is good and exciting.

Expectation is a Christian characteristic too. There were monks in second century Ireland who built their lives around it; you can still see their beehive shaped monastic cells, perched above the sea on Skellig Michael, facing the East where the Sun of Righteousness will rise, as Malachi says. (Should the picture look familiar, it's probably because you saw the last Star Wars movie.)



If you are like me, you are looking forward on tiptoe to see loved ones again this season. Children find expectation simple, but for adults it is framed with the understanding of passing time and the need to treasure each opportunity for reunion and love. These things only come with expectation and that is why it is holy.

The opposite of expectation and the expectant waiting of Advent, is resignation. With resignation comes a narrowing of perspective, the shrinking of hope and possibility, the decline of optimism and faith. Most importantly, your vision gets poorer and so too the chance that you will notice God.

So this is your task for Advent: to be as excited to encounter God at work in the world as God, I think, is to encounter you.

I hope you will get this letter in time for Thanksgiving. Thank God we don't have to think about presents yet, but can just be excited about seeing each other, and eating. It's remarkable how good life's simple gifts are. Remarkable but not unusual; I believe God made the world like this, for this, with these joys, these expectations, built in.

A blessed Thanksgiving to you, and a holy Advent.

*Your friend in Christ,
Michael*



Bazaar 2019

Thanks to everyone for making this bazaar another success! And a HUGE thanks to Diane Spitzck for once again taking on the task of organizing it. The new soup lunch was delicious, with the squash soup a surprise hit.

After expenses, our grand total is \$3,530.72

St. Paul's History Committee

St. Paul's Epiphany Cake

Epiphany marks the arrival of the three wise men delivering gifts to baby Jesus in Bethlehem. Many cultures celebrate by eating cake or bread with trinkets hidden within to represent the wise men's gifts.

The January – February LEAVEN from 1980 mentions that St. Paul's, "celebrated epiphany with a breakfast put on by the men, a short program by Father Doug Hiza, and much singing and fellowship." After that a service followed with the baptism of David Maki. Following the service, it states that the epiphany cake was, "an old custom revived. Hidden in the cake were a ring and three silver dollars." Betty Kristo found the ring in her slice and was responsible for the next year's cake. Russel Gary, Dorothy Manthey, and Linda Sothman found the silver dollars. Traditionally, these silver dollars were to be invested in God's work in the coming year.

The ring that St. Paul's hides in the cake has a date engraved from the 1870's. If anyone has any more information on the origins of the ring, please speak to history committee member.

The Tenth Bishop of MN (Bishop X)

The candidates have been announced so Bishop X is not quite as mysterious as s/he was. There is also the possibility that other candidates might be added to the slate by the petition of Minnesota Episcopalians.

You can find out a bit more about them here <https://mnbishopsearch.org/candidates/> and meet them in Faribault on January 16. Then on January 25th your delegates (Michael, Steve, Mary Levine, Drew, Jody, Gretchen) will vote to elect one of them. Please let us know what you think.

Would you like to help with Advent or Christmas worship?
We can use all the help we can get. Readers, singers and musicians especially welcome!

Cleo's MEWSings

Did you get to the Bazaar last Saturday? I was busy moving from one of my cozy spots to another as lots of furniture got moved, decorations were put up and items put out. Seems like everyone had a great time. Another great success thanks to Diane and her crew—and all the shoppers! Lunch had a new menu this year with three kinds of soup and apple crisp for dessert. Yumm! Kept an eye out for crumbs and drips! All were delicious.

Did you see the beautiful baptism of Gary Vyncke (parents Edwin and Katie) in early September? Lots of family and friends joined them after the service for a potluck in Brown Hall. And then the end of October, another lovely service when Rose Simon (parents Gloria and Andrew) was baptized, followed by tacos downstairs thanks to Gloria and Andrew! Both babies were good as gold! Both Gary and Rose seem perfectly fine being held and cuddled by various people at coffee hour! Lovely because some of us don't have little babies in our world!

Anyone been on a trip lately? Heard Lynn and Dave Seykora had a great time in Africa including a hot air balloon ride! Glad they are safely home! I may have nine lives but prefer to keep my little paws on the ground! Diane and Jack also made another trip to Phoenix for the graduation of two grandchildren.

Did you hear about a Jacob Warehime? He is off to Denver, Colorado for a new adventure! Moved the end of September with

the same company he has been working for in the cities. They have an office in Denver so he was able to transfer. Will miss his lovely smile! Come visit us sometime, Jacob!

Have heard about some deer hunters out this past week. Katie got her buck! Don't know who else did. Also heard Mollie Gfrerer and Diane Spitzack's daughter-in-law got their deer! Unfortunately, they were driving when it happened! Everyone is okay! Can't say the same for their cars or my four legged friends!

Several of our St. Paulites lost mothers this past month. Mary Levine lost her mom, Evelyn, in October. A full church helped celebrate her life on October 28th which would have been her 102nd birthday. Francy Hall spent a lot of time in Santa Rosa, CA as her mother, Nancy, lost her battle with cancer. And Robin McKey lost her mom. Dessie Gasner on October 20th. Love and hugs to all of you!

Also grieving and needing our prayers is Deanna Duffee who lost her beloved sister far too young! Deanna, you are in our hearts and in our prayers.

Several St. Paulites are on the ailing list. Mary Levine has been limping about with a sore knee, Bernie Reisenauer is having some health issues. And Maggie Dixon continues her chemo every other week but did say she was feeling good last Sunday. Prayers for them and others under the weather.

The Knit Wits continue to meet and finish prayers shawls. Their 350th one went out last Sunday. It went to a friend of Jenni Brittain who lost a baby. Also getting one recently were Robin McKey and Deanna Duffee. The knitters hope they bring comfort to all. And I get to play with the yarn.

Did you notice the clean and shiny floor in Brown Hall? Thanks go to Scott Brittain! And the rest of the church is being kept clean and sparkling by Fred and Karli Veeder. They have been cleaning every other Friday since May.

And now we look forward to Advent and Christmas! And cold and snow and icy winds but especially Advent and Christmas. And you will find me dozing in front of the nearest heat vent! Unless they get the fireplaces working! The Vestry is working on it! Would be lovely to have their cheerful heat.

Send me your news and will be back next month!



2020 Coffee Committees

Coffee hour after the service has long been an important part of our identity at St. Paul's. This time provides us the chance to catch up with one another, organize our events, and bless our prayer shawls. But times have changed, and the duty of providing hospitality has become a difficult one for the Women of St. Paul's to bear on their own.

Starting in 2020 we are asking everyone who enjoys coffee and treats after church to help.

In Upper Tanner you will find a sign up sheet on the easel. Please sign up for AT LEAST two months. Each month has a chair who will help organize the Sundays for that month and ensure that each Sunday is covered.



St. Paul's Green Team

Green Team

Thanks to everyone who recycled old/used ink jet cartridges at St. Paul's. We recently delivered over 50 cartridges to Crisis Resource Center. They recycle the cartridges and a donation is made to CRC. They also recycle cell phones. For more information you can call CRC at 507-451-1202.

The mission of Crisis Resource Center is to provide support and confidential services to individuals affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence.

December Events

WEDNESDAYS, STARTING DECEMBER 4: SOUP & ADVENT EVENING PRAYER

Holden Evening Prayer is a profound, sung service that we very much enjoy. It lasts about 20 minutes

DECEMBER 8: LESSONS AND CAROLS

This service is a wonderful way to find your way into the season.

DECEMBER 14: COOKIE WALK

9 a.m. to noon while supplies last. \$5 per dozen.

Please plan to bring several dozen of your best Christmas cookies and treats. They can be left in the kitchen on Friday 12/13. We will set up on Friday from 6-8 pm. There will be sign-up sheets in Upper Tanner for helpers. There will also be posters available for distribution.

DECEMBER 15: THE OHS CAROLERS AND WOSP MEETING

Don't miss this holiday tradition! The Carolers will sing during the service. Then afterwards, the WoSP will meet to discuss Bazaar and year-end gifts.

DECEMBER 21: CHRISTMAS BASKETS

9 a.m. to noon in Brown Hall with delivery after. Sign up lists for assembling and delivering will be in Upper Tanner. The Second Sunday offering in December will help to fund this ministry. Nominations for food basket recipients should be given to Fr. Michael, Marty, or Gretchen.

DECEMBER 24, 5:30PM CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP



Count Me In!

Thank you to all who have returned their stewardship forms. And thanks be to God who does infinitely more than we can ask or imagine with our gifts. You know we are very close to getting through the year without withdrawing from our slowly-recovering savings. It is touch and go, and we may not make it. Please do what you can, especially if you have it in mind to give before the end of the year. This is the moment when your gift would help the most.



Lay Schedule

Date	Lay Reader	Lector	Chalice	Ushers	Counter
Nov 17	Scott	Mary	Francy	Gary and Mike W	
Nov 24	Kristin	Leanne	Janet	Gretchen and Marty	Kristin
Dec 1	Jackie	Francy	Diane	Julie and Gayle	Francy
Dec 8	Julianna	Matt	Francy	Gary and Mike W	Gretchen
Dec 15	Mark	Gary	Janet	Maria and Rebecca	Mark
Dec 22	Kristin	Mary	Diane	Gary and Mike W	Julie
Dec 24	Scott	Leanne	Francy	Gretchen and Marty	
Dec 29	Jackie	Francy	Janet	Julie and Gayle	Francy
Jan 5	Julianna	Matt	Diane	Gary and Mike W	Gretchen



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

Coffee Committees

November

Mary Levine
Maria Dodd
Lynn Seykora
Barb Judd
Anne Deetz
Jackie Ostlund
Gloria Simon

December

Betty Kristo
Kathy Brittain
Jenni Brittain
Laurice Anderson
Diane Spitzack
Leanne Alt
Rebecca Krug

Altar Guild

November

Betty Kristo
Robin McKey

December

Betty Kristo

Brass Cleaning
December 7
9:30 am

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
St. Paul's Episcopal, visit
www.stpaulsowatonna.org
or join our Facebook group,
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Owatonna.