

The Epistle

November 2014

*“O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever-joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us;
and keep us in his grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
in this world and the next.”*
Martin Rinkart (1586-1649)

These words form the second stanza to the well known Thanksgiving hymn, *Now Thank We All Our God*. As I type them, the melody learned long ago begins to play within me. Sometimes hymns just do that without warning! The topic of “hymns” was part of a larger conversation I had with a parishioner who was nearing the end of his life. He wondered why I was still so deeply connected to the church and why, amidst her foibles, I had not just given up on the institutional expression of God. He was curious as to what it was about the “church” (her people, her music and her buildings) that had such an attraction to me.

As we talked, the word that came to mind to describe my relationship to the church was “anchor”. When you fish and drop anchor, you have the freedom to move and explore, but can trust that you won’t go adrift with the currents that press

against your boat. The church has always been a sort of tether that keeps me centered even though sadness, anxiety, fear or loss have sought to keep me off balance.

One of my favorite “anchor” times at St. Paul’s is during the weekday service on Tuesday when I am more easily celebrant and participant with a small community of faithful people. It’s less complicated than Sundays and easier for me to catch the Good News. This last week the congregation of the faithful were all friends of St. Paul’s who live on the streets. They are “regulars” and know the congregational responses by heart. Together we prayed for President Obama and for those who have lost their lives to violence. We remembered our Bishop and those in our church who are homebound. We shared a simple meal together around a table and prayed that God would send us out into the world in peace. It was the church at her best.

I love the church because she is a specific “place” where one can encounter God and God’s redeeming love

regardless of the story one is living. Martin Rinkart (clergyman and hymnist - 1586-1649) too found the church to be a “place” that could give people hope in the face of their living through the horrors of the Thirty Years’ War, epidemics, famine and plague. It is a wonder, given such trials, that he could even pen such a stunning text. Throughout history, the church has always held a place of hope while other institutions seem to have come and gone.

This Thanksgiving season, I am deeply grateful for St. Paul’s. I am thankful that she sits in the heart of the noise of the city and that (now!) all her doors are open wide for those who need to hear a word of hope. We are blessed that at every service there is someone to pray for those in need and that as a community, we share of our bounty to feed the hungry and welcome the stranger.

May we all take time this season to give thanks for the people and “places” that have kept our hearts in touch with joy.

Blessings,
Lynell+
The Rev. Canon Lynell

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One of the many challenges of Clinical Pastoral Education is coming up with a succinct statement of my guiding theology. Below is what I came up with to share with my fellow travelers on my current journey as a hospice chaplain intern.

My theology is guided by Jesus' statement of the summary of the Law that we are to Love the Lord our God with our whole heart, mind, soul and strength and to love our neighbors as ourselves. I believe that there is no out clause or "asterisk" on who is our neighbor. I extend neighbor to a love of all of God's creation. Being bi-vocational I see the need for love of our environment as a gift from our God. Love of creation takes hard work. It can be easy to love people just like us, or the "pretty" parts of creation, but loving people that are different takes work. I am a progressive/liberal in many ways so it can be a struggle to not react negatively to others who may be conservative in their approach to theology or environmental protection. However, I try to react in a way that acknowledges that I do not have all of the answers and that others have wisdom that I should listen for and not discard due to the "persuasion" of the presenter.

I also see God in people that our society would discard or see right through. As such I am guided by Matthew 25:44-45: "Then

they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." " As such, I try to engage with the homeless and hurt that come through the doors of our church and on the street when I am walking. We don't just have homeless people we have people named Jeff, Mike, Johnny, Linda, Maureen, and Martha. I have seen people who others will not make eye-contact with respond in wonderful ways to being affirmed and welcomed not just in the doors but to being honestly and sincerely offered communion and community as well.

My theology is also one that is sacramental at its core. I believe that we are healed in unimaginable ways through prayer and through offering the sacrament of communion to all who are drawn to it. In my church when I do the announcements I welcome all with the words that "we believe that this is Christ's table not ours and all who are present are welcome to participate in Holy Communion." This had led to some wonderful expressions of the Holy Spirit for me. In one instance a man, "Mitch" (not his real name), was quite introverted and sat in a corner by himself. He would come up to receive communion – not making eye contact –

but holding out a hand from his side. This went on for years when one day he marched up to me and received directly from the chalice and then enveloped me in a big bear hug. Thankfully I did not spill the chalice!

I resonate with an Episcopal Author and priest, Verna Dozier, when she asserted in her books that the "Dream of God" is for us to work to bring about a creation of Love in the here and now. That God is aching for us to assist in bringing God's reign of love to the here and now and not to wait for some transcendent time in the future when we are swept up to some heavenly cloud country singing our alleluias. The salvation offered to us now is offered to all. While I am a Christian I believe that God is bigger than we imagine. The love that God has for creation is limitless. For my tradition this is shown in the tradition of Holy Saturday (the day between Good Friday and Easter) where Jesus – between the Crucifixion and the Resurrection – descended to hell to break the bonds of hell and to offer God's Love to those in hell. A touchstone of my theology – though thoroughly Christian – is that God's love will continue to pursue us throughout our lives and even into death. It is our free will to accept or reject that love but God's pursuit never ends.

Many Voices, One Vestry

Carolyn Konrad, Sr. Warden

There's something expectant at noontime service when Canon Lynell leads the Prayers of the People. At one quiet moment she prompts, joyfully, ". . . and now, for what are we thankful . . . ?"

I hear murmurs from our circle of prayerful people . . . "for _____" "for _____" and "for _____."

What tumbles from my heart and softly from my lips most every time is, "I am thankful for St. Paul's." Then I count the ways of the moment.

My heart gives thanks for our encouraging, insightful, deeply caring Priest in Charge. Our richness of talented clergy at this unusual time. Our church

family, all together and each one.

I give thanks for those who lead and teach and sing and serve, including our dedicated Vestry members.

I am thankful for those who stumble through our doors, hurting and broken and hungry, seeking sanctuary. Those who give their time and skills, over and over, without expectation of thanks. Ordinary people who find joy in gathering together.

My mind counts our beautiful, historic building. The events and celebrations it invites into our inspirational space. The beauty of the light through

morning windows to the east, afternoon light from the west, evening light bathing our space with a mystical soft glow.

My spirit gives thanks for finding this sacred space. I think of what our city would be without sacred spaces, most especially this lovely, historic rock of ages at the corner of 15th and J Streets.

I give thanks – as many of you do – for St. Paul's.

Upcoming Sack Lunch Ingatherings

The next Sack Lunch Ingatherings will be **November 30th** and **December 28th**. Parishioners and friends of St. Paul's are invited to bring non-perishable food items for making Sack Lunches for those in our community in need of a meal. Items can include Tuna/Salmon foil packs, Vienna Sausages, protein bars, wrapped cookies, jello/pudding cups, juice boxes, napkins, plastic silverware, and paper lunch bags. On Sunday November 30th and again on December 28th we will gather in an assembly line and put the sack lunches together immediately following the 10am service.

Parish Work Day

All members of the congregation are invited to join us for a brief Parish Work Day on **Saturday, December 6th from 9am to Noon** (only!). We will be setting the stage for our holiday concerts and Christmas services. Bring comfortable clothes, rakes, pruning shears, and/or cleaning supplies to help us spruce up the place for the holidays. There will be treats for all.



Treasurer's Corner

Financial Summary* October 2014

Budgeted Income	2014 Actual	2014 Budget
Pledge	\$ 55,651	\$ 60,558
Giver of Record	\$ 8,016	\$ 8,333
Loose Plate	\$ 2,362	\$ 2,917
Special Offerings	\$ 5,029	\$ 1,167
Interest	\$ 71	\$ 42
Building Use	\$ 2,785	\$ 1,833
Altar Guild	\$ 780	\$ 208
Budgeted Income	\$ 74,694	\$ 75,058
Budgeted Expense		
Office/telephone	\$ 5,017	\$ 3,583
Insurance & Taxes	\$ 4,399	\$ 7,500
Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 2,246	\$ 2,500
Utilities	\$ 7,284	\$ 9,167
Subtotal	\$ 18,946	\$ 22,750
Diocesan Apportionment	\$ 8,494	\$ 8,333
Altar Guild	\$ 1,283	\$ 2,292
Endowment	\$ 1,984	\$ 1,887
Stewardship	\$ -	\$ 500
Outreach	\$ 2,978	\$ 2,042
Subtotal	\$ 14,930	\$ 15,054
Payroll	\$ 45,454	\$ 45,358
Budgeted Expense	\$ 79,330	\$ 83,162
Other Income		
Building Fund	\$ 4,652	
Music Fund	\$ 650	
Restricted Income	\$ 1,456	
Other Expense		
Building Fund Expense	\$ 7,412	
Music Expense	\$ 984	
Other Nonbudgeted	\$ 801	
Net Income	\$ (4,136)	(8,104)

* This is a summary of the financial report presented to the Vestry and reported to the Diocese.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas Clay, Treasurer

Note from Priest-in-Charge on the October Financial Summary

We began this year with an anticipated deficit of \$9,625. Currently that has been reduced to \$4,136 as of October 2014. Gifts through the Forward in Faith campaign have made an enormous difference in helping us move towards the possibility of ending this year in the black! If you are able to make an extra gift in November and December St. Paul's would be most grateful. Remaining deficits must be covered by unrestricted gifts that were intended to secure our future. Thank you for your ongoing and generous support. This has been a most remarkable year.

Update on Organist Search

The Music Search Committee will hold its final interview on Sunday November 23rd, and a call for a new Organist/Choirmaster will be made soon thereafter. We look forward to having an organist in place during the Advent and Christmas season. We have made arrangements with Kami Davis, Choirmaster of Trinity Cathedral's Choristers, to help pave the way for this transition. The Chancel Choir will return on

Sunday November 30th and assist in the O Antiphon liturgy. Choir members please arrive by 9:15AM to rehearse the service music. The first choir rehearsal with Kami Davis will be on Wednesday December 3rd from 7—8:30PM.

This is an exciting time at St. Paul's. We have all missed the music the Chancel Choir provides as part of our liturgy and worship. We are grateful to

those who have supplied as organists during this time of transition, especially Dennis Weber, Bruce Crane and Nancy Metzger. Please pray for the Search Committee as we make our final decision.

Blessings,
Lynell +

Rakers, Awake!

If you have anytime over the next few weeks to stop by and rake leaves, St. Paul's would be most grateful! These falling leaves don't last long, but can be a slippery mess for those who come to worship. Leaves do not need to be bagged, but simply raked in piles along the street side of the curb and will then be picked up by the City. The key to the garden area lock is the same as an exterior lock. The church is open daily from noon to 1pm if you want to use St. Paul's rakes.

Fall Blessings!



Looking Ahead

Greening of the Church

Sunday December 21 following 10AM service

Christmas Eve Service

December 24th at 8PM

Christmas Day Service

December 25th at 10AM



Christmas MARKET

Fundraiser for St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Saturday,
December 13, 2014
9 a.m. *until* 3 p.m.
15th & J STREET

- * Yard Sale • Indoor/Outdoor
- * Craft Fair
- * Children's Activities
- * Music
- * Food
- * Visit with Santa!

See reverse side for details about reserving a table.

Details for renting a table for the Christmas Market:

* Requested donation, \$25 to St. Paul's per 6 feet of space

* To reserve a spot contact: Helen (urbanpriests@gmail.com) or at (916)747-8470

In the Life of Our Congregation

Stewardship Update for 2015

The Finance Committee recently met to begin work on St. Paul's 2015 budget. Our anticipated needs for 2015 remain similar to that of 2014. Our expected expenses are approximately \$100,000.00. Our initial pledge ingathering has already

raised **\$62,902** for the Operating Fund and **\$2,870** for the Building Fund. A follow-up mailing is going out this week to those who were not in Church on Stewardship Sunday. If you are unable to pick up a pledge card at St. Paul's, you may email your intentions for 2015 to our

Stewardship Chair: JohnPaul Olafson at jpo@sheiladog.com. It would be wonderful to have all pledge intentions known by **December 7th** so we can approve the 2015 budget on Dec. 9th. Thank you for your continued support for the many ministries of St. Paul's.

Upcoming Concerts at St. Paul's

Saturday December 6th, 7:30PM—*Winter's Eve with Lady of the Lake*. A concert to enchant the spirit and warm the heart. Lisa and Michael Lawson's Celtic inspired music band performs this Solstice-themed concert to benefit Sacramento Baroque Soloists. Tickets are \$25 General/\$20 Senior/\$10 Student. If you cannot attend at St. Paul's, the concert will be at Steiner College, Fair Oaks on Sunday December 7th and at Harris Center in Folsom on December 13th.

Sunday December 7th, 7:30PM—*Chamber Music Society of Sacramento featuring William Barbini and Kineko Okumura, Violin*. Music by Vivaldi, J.S. Bach, Tartini and C.P.E. Bach. The concert will also be presented at Bet Haverim Synagogue, Davis on Saturday December 6th. Tickets are \$30 General/\$25 Senior (+60).

Thank you from Church Divinity School of the Pacific

Thank you, St. Paul's, for your gift on Oct. 10, 2014 and, more importantly, for helping us attract the brightest young minds in the Episcopal Church and train them to share the good news of Jesus Christ in the 21st Century. We are grateful for your support.

Faithfully Yours,

The Very Rev. W. Mark Richardson, PhD
Dean and President



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**OPEN HEARTS,
OPEN MINDS**

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St. Paul's Vestry

Carolyn Konrad, Sr. Warden (2017)	Keith Askew, Jr. Warden(2016)
Doug Clay, Treasurer (2015)	Leigh Stamets (2015)
John Paul Olafson (2015)	Sharon Kennedy (2016)
Eric Symons (2016)	Tammy Trovatten (2017)

Clergy and Staff

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