

**Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
Come adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King
Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

Christmas is here! The world, in ways most peculiar, are again announcing the Good News of God's coming among us. Radio stations and department store sound systems are queued up in ways that catch the believer's ear. Flashbacks of Christmases past come rushing in. In a world that seems so deaf to Love, the Light once again breaks through and invites us to come and see, on bended knee, the newborn King of Bethlehem.

I am so grateful for St. Paul's. She stands as an anchor hold for us, week after week, to find a space for true peace in the face of the nightly news. The images in the stained glass, the singing of hymns, the proclamation of the Word and the sharing in the Eucharistic feast equip us to leave as a people of hope to a world in need of Good News.

Christmas is a time when we open wide our doors to those who need us most. We are the **story tellers** to this generation that God came among

us, as one of us, to set us free from all that seeks to rob us of life.

Our **Christmas Eve** service will be Thursday, **December 24th, at 8pm**. It is indeed a most Holy Night. We gather to sing familiar carols, hear the prophetic words of the Child to be born and retell the Christmas story according to St. Luke. The liturgy concludes with the singing of Silent Night to candlelight. (If able, please bring refreshments to share with our guests following the service this night.)

Our **Christmas Day** service will be Friday morning, **December 25th** at 10am. Again we gather to sing the ancient carols

of the church and hear the story of the announcement of the Good News to the simple shepherds off tending their flocks. Their witness reminds us that God came to bring the message of salvation to all God's people. Let us join them in adoring the Christ Child this Christmas.

May the Joy of Christmas lift your hearts.

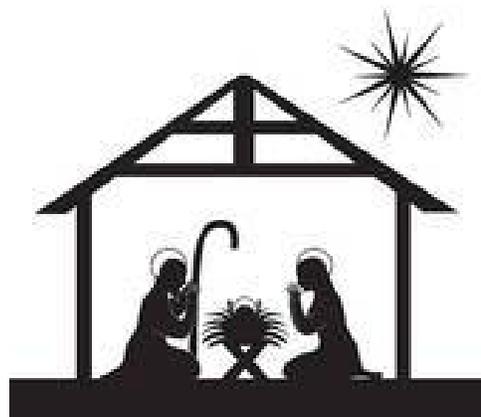
Blessings,

Lynell+

The Rev. Canon Lynell Walker+

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The anticipation of the Christmas season is considered a happy time for most of us; for others, it may remind them of all that used to be and cannot be anymore. In this season of expectancy people may be coping with a sense of loss, pain, suffering, loneliness, grief or overwhelming sadness that has changed the way they experience Christmas. In this complicated world it is hard to find the right words to say in these circumstances, and often those around you have no idea what to say either.

One of the books I've been assigned to read for Stephen Ministry training is entitled "Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart" by Kenneth C. Haugk, Ph.D. Mr. Haugk and his wife were both founders of Stephen Ministry, and the title of the book is from Proverbs 25:20: "Singing light songs to the heavyhearted is like pouring salt in their wounds." (Message Bible translation).

The book's emphasis is on how to relate to those who are suffering and learning how to say the right words at the right time, to lighten their heavy load. Amazingly, the author wrote this book

during the time his wife, Joan, was dying of ovarian cancer and because of his selfless act, this book is, and continues to be, a courageous act of love.

All of us, in one time or another, has struggled with words to say when someone we know has faced a tragedy in their lives: a death in the family, sudden hospitalization, cancer diagnosis, unanticipated job loss, disability, depression—the list of loss can be a long one. Although each circumstance may be unique, the best response of all can be summarized in a simple phrase: "I am truly sorry for your loss." This plain acknowledgement has the power to ease a difficult situation—hand in hand with prayer. We can pray for a person and we can certainly pray with them—as long as they are comfortable doing so. One of my favorite passages of this book is in Chapter 6, on Page 76, where Kenneth Haugk writes: "The best gift you can give to a suffering person is a heart full of understanding, eyes filled with tears, and ears ready to listen."

As I enter into the 3rd month of training for Stephen Ministry, which

coincides with the end of November's Thanksgiving feast and the beginning of December's Advent joy, I reflect on both the happy and sad occurrences that have filled my own life. I really miss my Mom at Christmas—she died 4 years ago and was my best friend (besides my sister). The joy? My sister will be attending a birthday party for her soon-to-be six year-old granddaughter in December. My sister battles severe depression everyday of her life and the anticipation of this event has given her a sense of happiness, and in turn, has given me a sense of joy.

As I continue my studies toward the goal of becoming a Stephen Minister, I think of the Buddhist concept of being a spiritual warrior. The word warrior, in this context, is taken from the Tibetan "pawo" which literally means "one who is brave." One of the greatest gifts of a spiritual warrior has is to hold the sacredness of sadness and of joy in their hearts at the same time. May this gift be yours during (and after) the holiday season.

WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT

By Carolyn Konrad

Nearly every Sunday we see her serving at the altar, carrying the cross, assisting the priest with the service, leading in the recitation of the creed. She serves the Eucharist, is a Eucharistic Visitor and trains prospective visitors in taking the sacraments to home-bound members of our congregation.

She has served as the Catechist at St. Paul's, has served as crucifer and as chalice bearer. She leads classes in Adult Spiritual Formation, preparing people for baptism and new membership in the church. She partners with others in teaching Sunday adult classes, and has been a children's Sunday School teacher.

Involved in Kairos Outside, a ministry to families whose loved ones are in prison, she is the one who asks us to bake dozens of cookies for young prisoners (no sprinkles, please.) She is also part of the Sunday morning support team, often preparing and delivering the homily.

A generous heart, known for giving to those in need, and a St. Paul's parishioner since 1981, Loreen Kleinschmidt is surely one of our "Good and Faithful Servants" at St. Paul's. Thank you, Loreen, for these and all the gifts you give to us.



ADVENT OUTREACH PROJECT

by Doug Clay



Jesus charged his disciples to welcome, care for, and provide support for strangers and all who were less fortunate. We at St Paul's are following this core tenet of Christianity. During the Season of Advent and through Christmas the vestry and clergy are setting a goal of collecting \$1,000 for assisting refugees from Syria and the Middle East. The people of this region have been living in utter violence; many have lost family members and all their possessions. They have been forced to live in overcrowded camps and walk many miles to reach safety.

All money collected will be forwarded to the Refugee Relief Fund of Episcopal Relief and Development.

Our Advent Banners this year depict the start of the migration of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem and on to safety in Egypt with the infant Jesus. They are starting on a dark night. A star, to light their way will be added for every \$10 donated to this project.



Budget Summary as of October 31, 2015

by Doug Clay

TREASURER'S CORNER

<u>Budgeted Income</u>	<u>YTD actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
Pledge	56,641	55,000
Giver of record	1,934	8,333
Loose plate	2,397	2,917
Special offerings	1,427	2,917
Interest	67	63
Building use	3,000	2,667
Altar guild	445	417
Budget enhancement	6,384	6,384
Wedding		
Funeral	350	
Budgeted income	72,644	78,698
 <u>Budgeted Expense</u>		
Office/telephone	3,485	5,042
Insurance & taxes	7,187	6,750
Repairs & maintenance	4,603	2,500
Utilities	8,584	7,500
Subtotal	23,859	21,792
 Diocese apportionment		
	7,344	8,333
Altar guild	2,824	2,395
Rainy Day Fund	1,741	1,887
Stewardship		
Other Programs	60	
Outreach	3,480	2,608
Subtotal	15,449	15,223
 Wedding payroll		
Payroll	46,573	47,121
Budgeted Expense	85,881	84,136
Net Ordinary Income	(13,237)	(5,438)
 <u>Other Income</u>		
Building fund	7,481	
Music fund	350	
Restricted Income	3,209	
Misc. Non-Budget Income	(176)	
Non-Budgeted Income	10,864	
 <u>Other Expense</u>		
Building fund expense	4,500	
Music expense	741	
Other non-budgeted	1,581	
	6,822	

2016 ANNUAL MEETING

On **Sunday, January 24, 2016** we will hold a Potluck Dinner and our Annual Meeting following the 10AM service.

One of the tasks of the Annual Meeting is to elect officers for the Vestry (3 year term) and Delegates for Diocesan Convention (1 year term). The Vestry meets monthly at 6PM to conduct the business of the Church. The Vestry will also go on a retreat on February 6th at Mercy Center in Auburn. We will meet from 9AM—3PM (lunch included) at a cost of \$35.00 per person.

Diocesan Delegates are elected to represent St. Paul's at the fall Diocesan Convention on November 13th. Our 2016 Convention will be held here in Sacramento. Those elected cover their own expenses of attending Diocesan Convention.

If you are interested, please contact The Rev. Lynell Walker at walker259@aol.com or Carolyn Konrad, Senior Warden, at ckonrad1@comcast.net.

Vestry and Diocesan Convention Delegates

To be nominated/elected to serve on Vestry or as a Diocesan Convention delegate, you must

Be a member in good standing

Be at least 18 years of age

Be a Giver of Record (make a 2016 financial pledge to St. Paul's)

If you are interested, please contact The Rev. Lynell Walker at walker259@aol.com, or Carolyn Konrad, Senior Warden, at ckonrad1@comcast.net.

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATE

It has been two years since our church directory was last published, and of course, as a reflection of life changes, we need to offer an opportunity to amend our listings as well as add newer people since the directory's publication. Mark Kane will be the point person to receive those changes through the end of December, so please let him know

(dm3453@pacbell.net) if there are corrections to be added to your listing. Thank you!



SACK LUNCH IN-GATHERING



The last sack lunch in-gathering for this year will be on **December 27th**. Please join us after the 10AM service as we prepare sack lunches to distribute during January. Nonperishable, easy-to-open single serve items are always welcome. (Vienna sausages, tuna, chicken, fruit cups, juice, pudding cups, granola bars, etc.) For anyone unable to shop but interested in contributing, you can make a donation. Please note on the check or cash envelope "Sack Lunch Program."



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**OPEN HEARTS,
OPEN MINDS**

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St. Paul's Vestry

Carolyn Konrad, Sr. Warden (2017)	Doug Clay, Treasurer
Keith Askew, Jr. Warden (2017)	Dori Darrington (2018)
Sharon Kennedy (2016)	Chris Cacciatore (2018)
Anne Slakey (2016)	Mark Kane (2018)
Tammy Trovatten (2017)	Diane Richards (2016)

Clergy and Staff

Rev. Canon Lynell Walker, Priest-in-Charge	st1849paul@sbcglobal.net
Rev. Eric Symons, Associate Priest	st1849paul@sbcglobal.net
Rev. Anne Slakey, Associate Priest	st1849paul@sbcglobal.net
Rev. Anne McKeever, Associate Priest	st1849paul@sbcglobal.net
Rev. Michael Backlund, Associate Priest	st1849paul@sbcglobal.net
Rev. Rik Rasmussen, Associate Priest	st1849paul@sbcglobal.net
Pat Underwood, Parish Administrator	st1849paul@sbcglobal.net
Nancy Metzger, Music Director	st1849paul@sbcglobal.net
Mike Platz, Sexton	st1849paul@sbcglobal.net