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**It's a holy time...**

I am writing this on the eve of Ash Wednesday. Tomorrow we will gather at the church at 12:10pm or 7pm for the liturgy that marks the beginning of Lent. We are reminded that God longs for us to be reconciled. We are invited into a season of self-examination and repentance by prayer, fasting, self-denial and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word.

As part of our community life at St. Paul's, we have accepted the Bishop's challenge this year to read the Gospel of Luke and Acts. There are copies in the church on the back table of the text in two translations (New Revised Standard Version and The Message). There is also a schedule of monthly gatherings following the 10am service, beginning on Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. At that time we will look at Luke as author and Chapter 1. Following that session we will then read one chapter each week until Lent 2017. It will be an easy, manageable way of learning to be mindful about making the scriptures part of our daily lives.

Lent invites us into a life of generosity. It is a season to find ways to let God's generosity flow through us to others for the sheer joy of it. One way of sharing of our time and resources is to support the Sack Lunch program. Each month we gather supplies for making sack lunches for those in our community who struggle to

find a meal. They are non-perishable, "openable" foods like: tuna packs, Vienna sausages, salmon packs, fruit cups, apple-sauce, individually wrapped snacks, plastic silverware, napkins and lunch bags. Items can be brought on the last Sunday of the month and lunches will be made following the 10am service. Other acts of generosity include helping to maintain the exterior of our property, raking leaves, and making the space clean and beautiful for all who walk through our doors. Where is the Spirit inviting you this Lent to reach to others?

The high point of Lent comes with Holy Week, beginning with Palm Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup> at 8 and 10am. We will gather with Palms and recall Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and remember the story of his Passion. On Tuesday Mar. 22<sup>nd</sup> we will gather at 7pm for a service of Tenebrae. It is a most moving service, recalling the words of the prophet Jeremiah. Maundy Thursday, Mar. 24<sup>th</sup>, will begin with a soup supper at 6pm followed by foot washing and Eucharist at 7pm. Our Good Friday services are March 25<sup>th</sup> at 12:10pm and 7pm. We gather to remember Christ's giving of his life and remembering that we all are within his loving embrace. Holy Saturday begins on March 26<sup>th</sup> at 10am. It is a time when

we remember Christ's descent to the dead to set all prisoners free. It reminds us that Love knows no bounds and can be found in our darkest moments of despair. The Great Vigil of Easter, March 26<sup>th</sup>, begins with a potluck dinner at 6pm. The grand Liturgy of Easter begins at 8pm. All are invited to bring a bell to ring at the announcement of the resurrection. It is a grand celebration of the triumph of the resurrection. Our Easter Sunday services are at 8 and 10am.

Lent is that wonderful season that allows us to prepare to receive the Good News of God in Christ. It's a solemn journey. It's a mindful journey. It requires trust to place your life, your time, your talents, your possessions and your heart into God's hands. In the end, Lent will change you. Come join the journey. Blessings,

*Lynell*

The Rev. Canon Lynell Walker  
Priest-in-Charge

*The Season of Lent*



## CONTEMPLATIVE EUCHARIST

by Rev. Anne Slakey

What is a contemplative Eucharist? How is it different from other ways of celebrating Holy Communion? Will someone who can't sit through silent meditation be able to take part?

On Saturday January 23 at 4:30, Contemplative Eucharist is coming to St. Paul's. We will use the Sunday readings and the very familiar Eucharistic Prayer A. Though there will be plenty of space for silence, within the Eucharist itself silences will last no longer than a couple of minutes. Instead, the Eucharist will be followed by an optional 20 minute period of Centering Prayer. We will be holding a Contemplative Eucharist on the last Saturday of every month.

A contemplative Eucharist, like any celebration of communion, relies on the action of God. Communion always works to remind us of the mysterious truth that we are in God, and God is in us, and that we are members, through Christ, of one another. For me, one of the most powerful experiences of this truth came through the very simple celebration of commun-

ion as part of a Centering Prayer retreat. We gathered in a circle, the same circle that we had gathered in daily to meditate. There was no complicated or strange liturgy, just the familiar words of the Eucharistic prayer and the readings of the day. What set the Eucharist apart was that in longer silences, there was more space to be aware of the presence of God. Because we were seated in a circle, there was a deep awareness of the gathered community, but without any pressure to socialize. God, as always, did the real work. But because we were still, it was easier to know.

The Contemplative Eucharist is coming to St. Paul's out of a desire to share this experience with you. Sally Smith and I went on a Centering Prayer retreat together, and wanted to bring the gift of this kind of worship to St. Paul's. You may never go on a weekend or 10 day retreat. But if you can sit silently, eyes open, for a few minutes at a time without feeling the need to start shouting, you can take part in a contemplative Eucharist. You might find that deep

awareness of the presence of God is simple, and comes easy. After all, knowing God in love is what we were made to do.

In the Post Communion Prayer of Rite One, we thank God for assuring us "that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son." The trouble is that for some, "mystical" and "contemplative" are trigger words, conjuring up images of hermits sitting on mountain tops, or monks in monasteries. The Rite 2 version of the Post Communion prayer changes the wording and refers instead to "holy mysteries" and says that we are "living members of the Body of your Son." I invite you not to be put off by words like mystical, mystery, or contemplative, and to give this form of Holy Communion a try. All it means is becoming more aware of what you already know. You are in God, and God is in you.



## BROTHERHOOD OF ST. ANDREW

The next gathering of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew will be Sunday, Feb. 28th at noon. The Brotherhood of St. Andrew is a community of men who are seeking personal spiritual growth, mutual ministry, and Christian service.

Father Eric Symons is the convener of St. Paul's chapter. Please contact him if you have further questions at: [fric33@yahoo.com](mailto:fric33@yahoo.com)

## MANY VOICES, ONE VESTRY

by Carolyn Konrad

This is my final post as your Senior Warden. What an honor it has been to serve for the past two years. I will continue to be active at St. Paul's, continuing to serve on the Vestry, coordinating church events and the master calendar.

Here's how to place an event on the church calendar: Send your information by e-mail, by postal mail, by phone or in person. Be sure to include:

**Who** is reserving the space and who will be using it

**What** the event will be (a concert, a meeting, a class)

**When** -- the date, time and duration of the event;

will you need rehearsal time or set-up time?

**Where** -- do you need the use of the church only? the Parish Hall?

**Why** -- what is your event about and who will be invited to attend?

**How** -- do you need use of the kitchen? church instruments?

any other needs?

I will check to see if time and space are available. Then will send your request on to Pat Underwood to place on the master calendar. You will receive an acknowledgement right away.

I will also place information about the event on our website -- working with Phyllis Atha -- and also in the Sunday program, if appropriate.

My contact information:

Carolyn Konrad <ckonrad1@comcast.net>

3939 Walnut Avenue #181, Carmichael, CA 95608

916-283-4246; 530-383-5393 (cell)

## VESTRY RETREAT

On Saturday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, the new Vestry gathered at Mercy Center, Auburn, for our first retreat. The vestry elected Dori Darrington as the Clerk and Joann Askew as the Junior Warden. Chris Cacciatore was appointed Senior Warden at our Annual Meeting on January 24<sup>th</sup>. Members of our current vestry include: Chris Cacciatore, Joann Askew, Dori Darrington, Carolyn Konrad, Tammy Trovatten, Doug Clay (Treasurer), Sharon Kennedy, Loreen Kleinschmidt and Mark Kane and Diane Richards (Strategic Plan). We spent most of our time together doing the "Safeguarding God's People" series and the "Listen for a Change" program on anti-racism. Mercy Center is a sacred place and a wonderful place to gather, plan and pray. Please keep the vestry in your prayers this year as we seek God's guidance.

by Doug Clay

## TREASURER'S CORNER

## St. Paul's Episcopal Church

## 2016 Budget

		2016 budget
	Total Income:	\$ 109,261.00
	Total expenses:	\$ 109,261.00
	<b>Difference:</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
Operating Income		
	Pledge Income	\$ 73,792.00
	Giver of Record	\$ 4,500.00
	Loose Plate Offering	\$ 3,500.00
	Special Offering Envelopes	\$ 2,500.00
	Interest	\$ 75.00
	Building Use Contributions	\$ 3,200.00
	Altar Guild Income	\$ 500.00
	<b>Operating Income Total</b>	<b>\$ 88,067.00</b>
Restricted Income		
	Wallace Estate	\$ 21,194.00
	Bequests	
	Enhancements	
	<b>Restricted Income Total</b>	<b>\$ 21,194.00</b>
	<b>Budgeted Income Total</b>	<b>\$ 109,261.00</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Administrative Overhead		
	Advertising	
	Website Hosting	
	Bookkeeping	\$ 250.00
	Telephone/Internet	\$ 2,000.00
	Postage	\$ 550.00
	Office Supplies & Miscellaneous	\$ 750.00
	Legal/Prof Fees	\$ 1,000.00
	Bank Charges	\$ 60.00
	Riso Service & Supplies	\$ 250.00
	<b>Administrative Overhead Total</b>	<b>\$ 4,860.00</b>
Building Overhead		
	Insurance & Taxes	\$ 13,000.00
	Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 4,500.00
	Utilities	\$ 10,000.00
	<b>Building Overhead Total</b>	<b>\$ 27,500.00</b>
Loans & Apportionment		
	Diocesan Apportmnt	\$ 10,000.00
	<b>Loans &amp; Apportionment Total</b>	<b>\$ 10,000.00</b>
Programs		
	Stewardship	\$ 500.00
	Other Programs	\$ -
	Rainy Day Fund	\$ 2,265.00

(Continued on page 5)

## St. Paul's Episcopal Church

### 2016 Budget

(Continued from page 4)

	Altar Guild	\$ 2,750.00
	Weddings	
	<b>Programs Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,515.00</b>
		<b>2016 budget</b>
Outreach		
	St. Matthew's food closet	\$ 250.00
	St. Paul's Sack lunch	\$ 250.00
	Hospitality	\$ 600.00
	Visibility	\$ 750.00
	Education - CDSP (seminary education)	\$ 750.00
	Other outreach programs	\$ 400.00
	<b>Outreach Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,000.00</b>
Payroll & Benefits		
	Rector Salary	\$ 22,164.00
	Rector's Pension	\$ 3,957.00
	Rector Convention/Cont Education	\$ 500.00
	Parish Administrator	\$ 7,689.00
	Sexton	\$ 5,956.00
	Supply Priest	\$ 4,500.00
	Organist	\$ 11,000.00
	Sub Organist	\$ 600.00
	Employee Payroll Taxes	\$ 2,020.00
	<b>Total Payroll &amp; Benefits</b>	<b>\$ 58,386.00</b>
<b>Budgeted Expense Total</b>		<b>\$ 109,261.00</b>

### A Report on the Syria Crisis Response Fund

This is a report of our biggest outreach created together (in 2015) as a faith community. I am referring to our successful Syria refugee campaign, which was run during our Advent through Christmas season. The inception of the idea came from a parishioner who thought we might become involved in aiding refugees fleeing from war in the Mideast, seeking to migrate to safer havens in Europe. Our vestry members did some research and discovered that Episcopal Relief and Development was partnering through its Refugee Relief Fund to help the migrants.

Here are the stats of that effort:

- ◇ Individual donations = \$1,892.99
- ◇ The vestry approved matching funds up to \$1,000.
- ◇ Further matching was done by the national church making the resulting value from our congregation about \$5,000.

We have a commemorative banner filled with stars representing each \$10 donation, which will remain on display through Easter.

by Doug Clay

## TREASURER'S CORNER

## 2015 BUDGET SUMMARY

DECEMBER 31, 2015

<u>Budgeted Income</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Pledge	68,814	66,000
Giver of record	3,519	10,000
Loose plate	2,958	3,500
Special offerings	3,570	3,500
Interest	78	75
Building use	4,020	3,200
Altar guild	644	500
Budget enhancement	7,664	7,663
Wedding		
Funeral	350	

<b>Budgeted income</b>	<b>91,617</b>	<b>94,437</b>
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Budgeted Expense

Office/telephone	4,004	5,700
Insurance & taxes	14,981	9,000
Repairs & maintenance	5,867	3,000
Utilities	<u>10,907</u>	<u>- 9,000</u>
Subtotal	<b>35,759</b>	<b>26,700</b>
Diocese apportionment	8,434	10,000
Altar guild	3,530	2,750
Rainy Day fund	2,112	2,265
Other Program	881	500
Outreach	<u>5,969</u>	<u>3,000</u>
Subtotal	<b>20,126</b>	<b>18,515</b>

Wedding payroll

<b>Payroll</b>	<b>55,387</b>	<b>56,022</b>
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Budgeted Expense	112,072	101,237
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<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>(20,355)</b>	<b>(6,800)</b>
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Other Income

Building fund	8,196
Music fund	350
Restricted Income	3,514
Misc Non-Budget Income	<u>553</u>

<b>Non-Budgeted income</b>	<b>10,864</b>
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Other Expense

Building fund expense	848
Music expense	1,269
Other non-budgeted	<u>1,032</u>

Faithfully,  
*Doug Clay*  
 Treasurer

## BEING AN ASSERTIVE CHRISTIAN

by Dori Darrington

Welcome to February 2016. I am continuing the journey of Stephen Ministry, and have four more months of training before completing the program in May. In the last part of 2015, the class covered an interesting topic—being an assertive Christian. This is an interesting question for most of us: How can a person be both Christian and assertive? Aren't we supposed to be passive, long suffering, giving up our own needs and happiness for the sake of others? Quoting from the book we used for Stephen Ministry study, "Speaking the Truth in Love –How to be an Assertive Christian" by Ruth N. Koch and Kenneth C. Haugk, "Assertive thinking seeks the truth by challenging...untruthful, irrational beliefs and self messages." The title of the book comes from a letter Paul wrote to the Ephesians and its emphasis was making God's plan of salvation known to everyone. In Ephesians, Chapter 4, Paul talks about building up the body of Christ and warning the Ephesians to not be "...tossed by waves and swept along by every wind of teaching...rather living the truth in love, we should grow in everyway into him who is the head, Christ." (NAB/Ephesians 4:14-15). What exactly does this mean to us today? The authors point out on Page 33 that "When you refuse to concentrate exclusively on your anxieties and fears and instead look for the truth, you can celebrate what God has done and continues to do in your life."

I think assertiveness is a hard topic for most of us. How exactly do we use assertive behavior, if we've been mostly passive all our lives? My Mom would have told me to "not rock the boat" or say "do not make waves" about one situation or another. However, not speaking up for ourselves may not make a situation better. In fact, it can sometimes make it worse. So what do we do? Speaking the Truth in Love on page 52, gives us a great suggestion. We turn to Jesus. We read Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and see how our Lord was an expert in living assertively, and chose specific times to behave passively and aggressively to accomplish his ministry of salvation. "The key" as the authors put it, "is in the loving and the choosing." Jesus loved first before responding to any situation and we can make the choice to do that too.

What it boils down to is that we have the power to make our own choices and this includes using our time wisely and being open to new ideas, perceptions, and a way of thinking on how we respond to others. Keep in mind that the most important aspect of the assertiveness teaching/training is to become authentic people of God. This means being honest and open, living with integrity and living out our core beliefs. It also means making active choices, and living the gospel message in our daily lives.

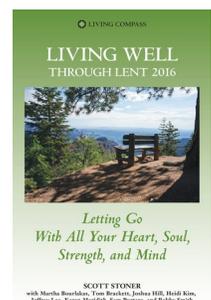
Remember, we can also use assertiveness to ask God for what we need with confidence, praising Him in good times and bad—and in this way, too, we speak the truth in love.

Blessings!

## LETTING GO FOR LENT 2016

Now available on the back table, for the low, low price of FREE:

Living Compass *Living Well Through Lent 2016: Letting Go With All Your Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind*. Use this booklet for your daily personal reflections as you journey through Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday on February 10 through Easter Sunday, March 27. If we run out, please contact the Rev. Anne Dryden McKeever, St. Paul's Living Compass Congregational Wellness Advocate, to order more copies: [amckeever@wavecable.com](mailto:amckeever@wavecable.com).





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OPEN MINDS**

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