

The Messenger

FEBRUARY
2023
Volume 26
Number 7

St. Paul's

A progressive community of faith with ancient roots.



Stewardship Pledge Report

by Charlie West, for the Stewardship Committee

Our Stewardship Theme for this year, from TENS--The Episcopal Network for Stewardship--is "Rooted in Abundance". One of the reasons I like being part of the Stewardship group at St. Paul's is that we deal in abundance. Other parts of the church family deal with scarcity issues -

- + people experiencing a scarcity of food, and we help them through Feeding America,
- + people experiencing a scarcity of money, and we help them through the Bishop's Fund and Almoner's Fund,
- + people experiencing a scarcity of community or a sense of well-being about who they are and where their lives are going, and we help them through a variety of spiritual formation and community building activities
- + even "closer to home," people at the church who experience a scarcity of money needed to pay the heat bill, the light bill, the salaries, the snowplowing, and all the other expenses required to keep St. Paul's open and functioning, being the people of God, the followers of Jesus, in this time and place.

All these people deal with scarcity issues – the Stewardship people deal in abundance. God gives so fully and freely. In the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew's primary collection of Jesus' teachings, again and again he references God's generosity. Paraphrasing selected verses(!), Jesus says -

- + Blessed are the poor in spirit--God's giving you the whole realm of God's Peace;
- + Blessed are the meek--you're getting the whole earth;
- + If you give, or pray, or fast, and don't make a big deal of it, God is waiting to bless you;
- + Consider the birds of the air, consider the lilies of the field...;
- + Ask and it will be given to you; Seek and you will find, Knock and heaven's door swings wide.
- + God knows how to give good gifts to all God's children and longs to do it.

All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above....

Yeah – Stewardship people deal in abundance!

Looking ahead to 2023, from our abundance, 35 "giving units" have pledged \$75,431 to support the ministry of St. Paul's Church during 2023. That's an average pledge of \$2,155/year, \$180/month. All of the people who have to deal with scarcity – in the church and in the community – say "Thank you!"

Vestry Review

by Kris Mowafy, Senior Warden

Our Vestry Committee met on January 15, 2023. Among the subjects discussed were three that I feel would be of interest to you.

- 1) Our **Annual Meeting** is approaching on Sunday, **February 19**, following the service. The Vestry will provide a lunch and we hope that it will be a productive, enlightening meeting.
- 2) We are also continuing the process of discerning a new generation of Mutual Ministry. The team members, along with a few others, have been meeting with Sue Ray, who is guiding us through this important mission of discovery. We hope to have it completed by the Annual Meeting. Please keep us in your prayers during this important time.
- 3) We have also been working ever so diligently on the much-needed repair of our building. It was made evident over a year ago when it was realized that there was a leak above the stained-glass window near the piano in the Sanctuary. On inspection, it was noted that the sandstone exterior of our church needed repair. Two companies have inspected the problem, and we have received bids for the repair. It is going to be an expensive undertaking, and we are initiating a Letter of Intent to a grant company in the hope that we can be approved for some money to defray the cost of this necessary repair. We are anticipating a Capital Funds Campaign to help raise the cash needed to complete this project. If anyone is interested in being involved in this campaign, please let any member of the Vestry know.

The Six Principles of Nonviolence: Dr. Martin Luther King

King's notion of nonviolence had six key principles.

- ✦ First, one can resist evil without resorting to violence. ("I say to you when someone hits you on the right cheek, turn to him the other as well")
- ✦ Second, nonviolence seeks to win the "friendship and understanding" of the opponent, not to humiliate him.
- ✦ Third, evil itself, not the people committing evil acts, should be opposed.
- ✦ Fourth, those committed to nonviolence must be willing to suffer without retaliation as suffering itself can be redemptive.
- ✦ Fifth, nonviolent resistance avoids "external physical violence" and "internal violence of spirit" as well: the nonviolent resister not only refuses to shoot his opponent, but he also refuses to hate him. The resister should be motivated by love in the sense of the Greek word *agape*, which means "understanding," or "redeeming good will for all men."
- ✦ The sixth principle is that the nonviolent resister must have a "deep faith in the future," stemming from the conviction that "The universe is on the side of justice."

Submitted by Marna Franson

Music for Lent

by Darrius Morton

Greetings everyone!

As we prepare for the Lent season, we would like to invite you all to join us through a series of weekly, hour-long organ improvisations that will take place on Tuesday evenings. Darrius Morton will play improvisations each Tuesday of the Lent season starting on **February 28** and continuing through **April 4**.

This event series offers a space for individuals and families to commune, while dedicating time, space and focus towards God and the multitude of blessings that we are given. Come, bring a friend, bring a Bible or something to knit, and enjoy some peaceful meditations on Lenten psalms.



Update from Outreach

by Mary Sullivan

The Outreach committee did not meet in December. The January 19th meeting was called on account of snow; that meeting has been re-scheduled to January 24th at 10:00.

Our December and January outreach focused on the homeless, asylum seekers, and others who are in need of generosity during this season of gifting. The traditional “mitten tree” was overflowing with contributions of mittens and gloves, warm socks, scarves, and hats. These were distributed to RATI, Lake Superior Recovery facility and Ripple Effect (NMU). In addition, St. Paul’s elves helped fulfill the “wish lists” of 15 youth who reside in Lake Superior Village. I have heard from the agencies who received our contributions, and they were greatly appreciated. We continue to collect spare change in the ICan during coffee hour for the Asylum Seekers project in partnership with Messiah Lutheran Church.

We have resumed Community Meal but attendance has been very low. Not sure what’s going on there, but we will be discussing this at our next meeting on January 24th. The January Community Meal is cancelled. One thing we do know, however, is that we need two people to take leadership for this meal. Jacquy Shellenbarger is one of those people but because this is a “boots on the ground” (or maybe it should be “sandals in the kitchen”) ministry, Jacquy needs at least one partner to assist in the set-up and

clean-up. Stuff happens ... If you have thoughts about Community Meal and/or would like to be that partner, please talk to me about this.

I would like to share with you the Justice and Peace initiatives that our Diocese is involved in. I think you will find connections with the Outreach ministry of St. Paul’s.

- ❖ End Gun Violence in Michigan
- ❖ Healing & Reconciliation with Indigenous Tribal Communities, Becoming Beloved Community, and the Great Lakes Peace Center.
- ❖ Human Trafficking
- ❖ Feeding the Hungry – Feeding America W. MI.
- ❖ Protecting Our Water – Water is Life, Line 5/Tunnel
- ❖ Suicide Prevention – Soul Shop
- ❖ Campus ministries: Canterbury House (MI Tech), NMU (Common Grounds), and Bay College.

“We cannot have a healed society, we cannot have justice, if we do not reclaim and repair the human spirit.” Angel Kyodo Williams

Class Opportunity



Our goal at Little House Aerial is to provide aerial arts classes for youth and adults, no matter the background, gender, or walk of life. We provide a safe space for all students to learn and enjoy the sport.

We offer classes in all of the three major aerial disciplines including aerial trapeze, lyra, and silks. Classes are available for those 9-99 and take place on Thursday and Friday evenings.

People are able to contact me, AJ Schierk, at aj.schierk@gmail.com or at Littlehouseaerial@gmail.com or find us on Facebook at Little House Aerial



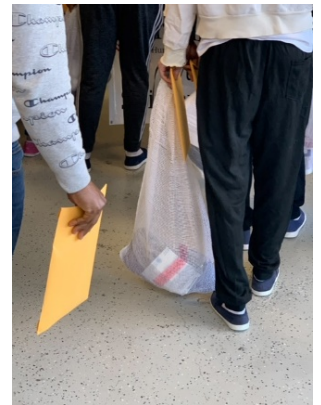
Team Brownsville

by Sue Micensky

We continue to help asylum seekers at the bus station in Brownsville, Texas. Last year most of the people who were allowed to stay in the United States were from Nicaragua. We don't know what changed but recently we saw people from Venezuela, Haiti, Mexico, and even Russia. Some qualify for exemptions to Title 42 and can cross at a port of entry. Others swim across the Rio Grande River, present themselves to Border Patrol, and request asylum in accordance with U.S. law. They are sent to a detention facility to be processed. When they are released, Border Patrol brings them to the bus station. All of their belongings are in a mesh onion bag, and they have an envelope with their immigration papers. They are strangers but we welcome them. If they are thirsty, we give them water. If they are hungry, we give them food. If they need clothing, we provide that. (Sound like anything you have heard in church?)

The following is summarized from a story by James Pace, author of Mothers of Exiles. James was greeting refugees at the bus station before Team Brownsville became organized and was a mentor to our founding members.

Benito was a taxi driver in Nicaragua where he lived with his wife and son. Because he assisted those who were protesting against the Sandinista government, he was identified as a traitor. He was jailed, beaten, and threatened with a revolver. Fearing for his life, he took a bus through Central America and Mexico. He paid a coyote (smuggler) \$1,000 to ferry him across the Rio Grande River in an inflatable raft with other asylum seekers. He was taken by the migra (Border Patrol) to a corral (holding pen) and then to the hielera (cold storage room in a detention facility). For eight days he endured cold temperatures, intense bright lights, minimal food, and such crowded conditions he had to sleep standing up. When he was released, he went to the bus station and traveled to Los Angeles to live with a friend. He is pursuing asylum and is attempting to get his wife and son out of Nicaragua. He is one of the many people who are helped by Team Brownsville.



Stewardship Words of the Month - Prayers, Presence, Gifts, Service

by Charlie West

We are used to thinking about stewardship in terms of money, and it is, but it is also about so much more. Over the past few years, we have encouraged ourselves to think of Stewardship in terms of Prayers, Presence, Gifts, and Service. Each month someone from our congregation or community will share a few thoughts about what one aspect of stewardship means for them.

Reflection

by Geoff Smith

At their recent meeting, members of the Stewardship Committee were challenged to think about the desired outcomes of their efforts. We, with Marna's prompting, produced Prayer, Presence, Gifts and Service. Next, we each were asked to reflect on how those concepts affected our lives and share our feelings via The Messenger. What follows are my musings on Service.

Why Do I Serve?

I have indulged my fondness for databases and spreadsheets (essential tools of a bean counter) by serving as check writer during the major construction to replace our Guild Hall, rehabilitate at-risk stained-glass windows, and organizing cashiers for our Craft Fairs. My anal-

retentive bent had free rein while creating databases to allow searching five Parish Registers for specific names, baptisms, marriages, and burials, or creating a means of locating books in our library by title, author, or copyright date.

Yes, I have accepted projects for which I enjoyed figuring out a solution. My association with St. Paul's, starting in 1976, was originally based on tagging along with my spouse, but has grown into an appreciation of how valuable the church's contributions to our community are. I respect the goals I see pursued and gain satisfaction from having a small role in that pursuit. I serve because I want to be part of something good AND I enjoy our fellowship.

The Episcopal Church as Resource

by Marna Franson

For the last few Messengers, I have written a list of upcoming events, things that might catch our attention. Today, however, I have just spent the day online at the annual FORMA conference, a gathering of Christian Education professionals. I attended the morning plenary session and three afternoon workshops.

What a day like this does for me is remind me: 1. that as a church we are not alone in our hopes, desires, and struggles; 2. there are amazing individuals devoted to church and its flourishing; and 3. we do not have to reinvent the wheel but can partake of the wisdom out there from fellow travelers.

As I sat in the ZOOM room and learned about Centered: A Christian Discipleship experience, I was reminded of the magic in small group ministry. As I listened to a workshop on Messy Church, I felt myself dropping into a conversation that we had at the Welcomers and the Stewardship committee meetings about how to reach out to those beyond our walls.

My big take-away is this: let's access our Episcopal Church resources! Charlie West this year discovered some effective materials for our journey into stewardship. The materials we experienced from the TENS organization helped shape our formation in that area. There is much more where this comes from. And the best part: it is not just for clergy. In fact, most of what is available via the Episcopal Church is designed for ordained and non-ordained to access and use equally.

So here is my challenge to all of us. Let's explore what the Episcopal Church has to offer. Let's wander around the website. Let's sit in on webinars and sign up for support meetings from whatever is our interest: whether it be church revitalization, or building faith, or racial reconciliation or Lenten study or whatever. When we think "I sure wish the church would provide (fill in the blank)" let's first go see if it already does. And then, let's try some things. Let's try a Lenten study, or form some small groups, or sit in on a series of webinars. Let's let our Episcopal belonging help challenge, sustain, and revitalize us!

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/>

Spring Quarter Schedule

Bob Railey

The usual display of April through June schedule and the associated activity rosters will be posted on the sign-up bulletin board in the chapel hallway from **February 12** through **March 12**. You may use the schedule to sign up for specific role(s) on specific date(s), or you may use the rosters to increase (or decrease) the role(s) in which you participate or indicate when I should not assign you. Please speak to me if you have any questions about what any roles involve.

Completed schedules will be distributed beginning **March 19**.

Liturgical Leadership

Sundays:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Preside</u>	<u>Preach</u>	<u>Deacon</u>
February 5	Epiphany 5	Bob	Lynn	Mary
February 12	Epiphany 6	Jim	Jim	Mary
February 19*	Last Epiphany	Marna	Marna	Coralie
February 26	Lent 1	Brad P.	Brad P.	Judy

*Annual Meeting

**Brad Pickens is a missionary of our diocese

Ash Wednesday:

February 22	Ash Wednesday	Time & Leaders not decided.
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February Birthdays

Sue Micensky	3
Cory Hambleton	4
Nancy Railey	6
Louise Pearson	8
Suzanne Harding	15
Mary Mikhael	26
Meg Goodrich	27

St. Paul's Church
Parish Financial Report
(January 1 through December 31, 2022)

<u>Financials (as of 12/31/2022)</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Tot. 2022 Budget</u>
Total Income	\$98,037	\$104,420	\$104,420
Expenses for Operations	\$151,421	\$150,480	\$150,480
Net Church Operational Loss	(\$53,384)	(\$46,060)	(\$46,060)
Non-Routine Bldg. Repair Expenses	\$2,569	\$2,630	\$2,630
Net Overall Church Loss	(\$55,953)	(\$48,690)	(\$48,690)

<u>Trust Asset Status</u>	<u>1/1/2022 Beg. Balance</u>	<u>Investment Gain/(Loss)</u>	<u>Trust Exp. & Gains from Interest</u>	<u>Distributions To the Church</u>	<u>9/30/2022 Ending Balance</u>
St. Paul's Trust (Church Operational Focus)	\$481,089	(\$112,945)	\$2,096	(\$8,000)	\$362,240
Shiras Trust (Bldg. Maint. Focus)	\$178,839	(\$41,986)	\$779	\$0	\$137,632
Total	\$659,928	(\$154,931)	\$2,875	(\$8,000)	\$499,872

Important Notes:

1. We withdrew \$70,000 from the St. Paul's Trust in 2021 to cover church operating deficits into early 2022. This is approximately 15% of the St. Paul's Trust 2021 beginning value. Prudent financial management indicates we should withdraw only around 4% to 5% annually if needed. We have made three (3) \$8,000 withdrawals in 2022 from the St. Paul's trust to support church operations for a total of \$24,000. Two of these withdrawals were made after the cutoff date for the above Trust Asset report. This is approximately 5% of the St. Paul's Trust beginning value in 2022. We don't anticipate further withdrawals in 2022.

**Annual
Meeting
Sunday
February 19,
2023
Noon**

**Our next Messenger edition:
March 2023
Please submit articles by
Friday, February 24, 2023
by 6pm**

The Messenger Team

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