

The Messenger

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St. Paul's

A progressive community of faith with ancient roots.



The Spotless Rose, Rooted in Abundance – A Christmas Reflection (TENS)

One of my favorite Christmas Carols is “Lo, How a Rose e’er Blooming.” Almost any setting of it, whether it is called by this name, or by its other name “A Spotless Rose”, is a beautiful weaving of metaphor leading us to the Incarnation. It’s a play on the word root, meaning at the same time, the lineage of a family and the grounding of a flower. As only poetry and music can allow, this metaphor winds its way through the text until it blooms into a fragrant rose.

My grandmother used to remind me that all flowers are weeds, and that what distinguished one from another was how people appreciated it.

Those blessed weeds which bore fruit or beautifully colored or fragrant flowers were nurtured by humansubs, cultivated, prized. Those that were perhaps simpler, but just as glorious and complex in their form and their



role, were passed by, admired perhaps from afar. Yet, prized or forgotten, cherished or shunned, all flowers attract pollinators, attach their fragrance and pollen to the wind, stand tall in the sun, and fall back in the darkness of the winter.

Each flower is a sign of abundance, whether we recognize it, or not. Each is numbered and counted in God’s Eden, given to us in the gift of Creation and the science of evolution to be just what it was designed to be. The famous Carol might compare Jesus to a tender, yellow buttercup, or a purple, fuzzy thistle, or a proud dandelion rebelliously standing tall in an otherwise green lawn, each of them a sign of God’s extravagant abundance. Whether rose, buttercup, or dandelion, the roots absorb the same nutrients and water, the leaves soak in the same sunlight, the pollen catches on each gentle breeze, knowing, as each of us know, that we are rooted in abundance, given our role in this great garden of life. |

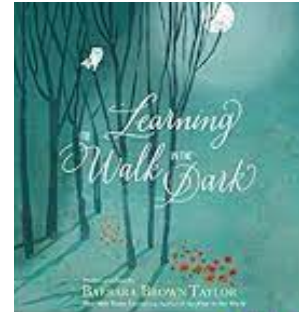
Question for reflection:

How do your roots shape your ministry, either the roots of your family traditions, or sources of grounding?

Cn. J. Davey Gerhard is the Executive Director of TENS. He lives in San Francisco, California where he works on diocesan staff for DioCal and worships at Holy Innocents in Noe Valley.

Read a Book with Charlie? Learning to Walk in the Dark

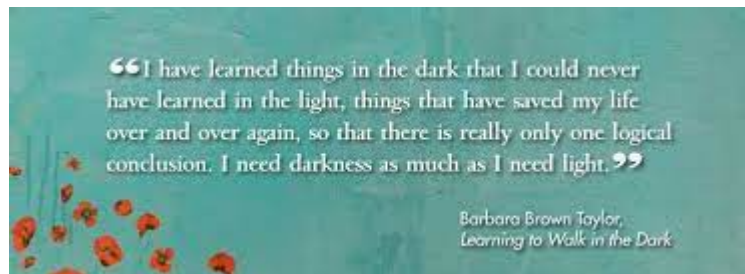
During the dark days of January, and maybe into February, I am going to read *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, a book by Barbara Brown Taylor. She was an Episcopal priest, named one of the 12 most effective preachers by Baylor University. She served on staff of a large metropolitan church in Atlanta, and then as the rector of a small rural church in Clarksville, Georgia (population 1,500), and then left the parish ministry to become a Professor of Religion at Piedmont College. Along the way she wrote numerous articles and spoke at clergy retreats. She wrote *Leaving Church* – a memoir of faith, a beautiful book about her journey into and out of the church. Then she wrote *An Altar in the World – a Geography of Faith* about how she experiences a Divine Presence through simple practices of ordinary life, like walking, working, saying “no,” encountering others. Finally, she wrote *Learning to Walk in the Dark* – a book about “learning things in the dark that I could never have learned in the light, things that have saved my life over and over again.”



Well – I just finished reading *Leaving Church* and highly recommend it. I’m starting in on *An Altar in the World*. Then I’m going to read *Learning to Walk in the Dark* during January, a couple of chapters a week. If you want to read it too, we could get together once a week and talk about it – in person, on zoom? Interested? Let me know – mqtc haz@gmail.com

January Birthdays

Jane Ryan	2
Margaret Jajich	10
Dan Carpenter	11
Peggy Sheehan	28



Liturgical Leadership

Sundays:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Preside</u>	<u>Preach</u>	<u>Deacon</u>
January 1	Christmas 1	Marna	Marna	Judy
January 8	Epiphany 1	Bob	Judd	Mary
January 15	Epiphany 2	Marna	Marna	Pat
January 22*	Epiphany 3	David Carlisle	David Carlisle	Coralie
January 29	Epiphany 4	Marcia	Bob	Judy

**Beginning this year, Diocesan personnel will be with us up to one Sunday per month.
David is one of our Missioners in the Diocese.*

St. Paul's Church

Parish Financial Report

(Jan. 1 through November 30, 2022)

<u>Financials (as of 11/31/2022)</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Tot. 2022 Budget</u>		
Total Income	\$84,549	\$95,102	\$104,420		
Expenses for Operations	\$138,687	\$137,553	\$150,480		
Net Church Operational Loss	(\$54,138)	(\$42,451)	(\$46,060)		
Non-Routine Bldg. Repair Expenses	\$2,569	\$2,029	\$2,630		
Net Overall Church Loss	(\$56,707)	(\$44,480)	(\$48,690)		

	<u>1/1/2022</u>	<u>Investment</u>	<u>Trust Exp. & Gains</u>	<u>Distributions</u>	<u>9/30/2022</u>
<u>Trust Asset Status</u>	<u>Beg. Balance</u>	<u>Gain/(Loss)</u>	<u>from Interest</u>	<u>To the Church</u>	<u>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 report. This is approximately 5% of the St. Paul's Trust 2022 beginning value. We don't anticipate further withdrawals in 2022.

The Messenger Team

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Our next Messenger edition:

February 2023

Please submit articles by
Friday, January 20th
by 6pm

