

The Messenger

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Gathered by Grace, Sent Forth to Serve



**JULY 2025
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FSP Grant News *by Fred Cole*

Work has continued quietly on the NFSP Grant in the last several weeks. We were very glad to meet our fundraising goals for this spring and on May 1 applied to receive the first half of the \$135,000 NFSP Grant funds. After a few more electronic “paperwork” steps in May and June, those funds will be sent to St. Paul’s in the next few weeks.

We are very grateful that Bishop Ray reached out through his contact network to folks who are very supportive of the community building efforts at St. Paul’s. The Sage Foundation will be making a generous contribution to the Building Restoration fund. An individual donor who supports community food programs will also be making a contribution to upgrade St. Paul’s kitchen and support and hopefully expand our community meal ministry.

Work is scheduled to begin in late August or September to restore damaged sandstone on the Sanctuary and Morgan Chapel as well as tuck-point damaged masonry joints. Restoration work on the stained glass is planned for 2026.

In the meantime, we will continue to raise funds to meet our fundraising match for the NFSP Grant. If you would like to help St. Paul’s reach its fundraising goals for the NFSP grant, you can write a check to St. Paul’s Episcopal Church. Please note “Building Restoration” in the memo and send it to St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 201 E. Ridge Street, Marquette, MI 49855.

If you prefer to make an online donation, you can donate [here](#). Please select “Building Restoration” from the menu.

Or you can go to <https://tithe.ly/give?c=5527881> to donate online. Please select “Building Restoration” from the menu. You can also scan the QR code below to donate online.



First Wednesday Reading Group

We have two interesting and enjoyable books lined up for the next two months for the First Wednesday Reading Group.

For July we are going to read and talk about *The Autist's Guide to the Galaxy* by Clara Tornvall. The blurb says it's "a fun, comprehensive, and accessible exploration of neurotypical behavior." In other words, a chance for most of us to see how the rest of us experience our culture! That's for Wednesday, **July 2**. (The only issue might be finding a copy of the book! I've had a hold on a copy at Peter White for a couple of weeks – I'm #1 on the list and Margie is #2. So if it comes in the next few days and we read fast we might have one to loan a few days before the 2nd. Otherwise, we might have to look into purchasing it, and I don't know if bookstores in town have it in stock or not! Anyway, hopefully it will work out somehow. Let me know if you are interested in going together on this.)



Then for August we are going to read and discuss *Winter Heart* by B.G. Bradley. It's a story about a poet, educator, husband, and father named Ben O'Brian. Only his world has fallen apart – his career is over, his children are grown, and his wife has died. He has retired, with his Labrador retrievers, to his secluded cabin on the shores of Hunter Lake (in the UP!) Only, his family coerces him into joining his sister on a cross-country train trip to their brother's wedding. Along the way Ben meets a mysterious, oddly familiar, stranger. (As a special treat, B.G. has kindly offered to sit in with us – so a chance to talk not only about the book, but about what went into writing it.) That's all for **August 6**.

The First Wednesday Reading Group meets on the first Wednesday (Duh!) at The Crib Coffeehouse on Third Street. (In the upstairs room – if that's a problem, let me know and make other arrangements.)

Questions? More information? Email mqtechaz@gmail.com or call/text Charlie at 906-360-9216

**We want to celebrate St. Paul's community
for coming together for Pride this year.**

It was grand!



Quick Summary from the June Vestry Meeting

- Staff from Messiah Lutheran Church will be invited to the July Vestry meeting to discuss how they help with community needs (ie: our Almoner Fund) Jan will review the bid about the sound system--any tech wizards are invited to reach out and give their thoughts!
- A home school group has approached us to use the church, plans ongoing.
- Ongoing discussion about coffee hour/hospitality. Vestry voted to commit \$40 per week to fund.
- St. Paul's will provide lunches on August 4th and 14th for Habitat for Humanity. Watch for more details.
- Bob will continue to clean out the undercroft with Vestry approval to sell items as appropriate. He will also be putting notices in **THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S** for small jobs that need doing, so if you have a spare hour or 3....
- The cemetery plots that have been deeded to St. Paul's over the years (18 in total) have some restrictions on them but will be added to our assets, so they don't get forgotten.

All are welcome to come to Vestry meetings.

Jan Edwards
Senior Warden

Land Acknowledgment:

In this diocese before we begin meetings or Prayer Services we begin by acknowledging that the land we are on is the land of our First Nations brothers and Sisters.

As we gather today, let us remember that we in the Diocese of Northern Michigan acknowledge the sacred land where we work, live, teach, learn, and build community. This land is the territory of the Anishinaabe people.

We recognize the repeated violations of sovereignty, territory, and water perpetrated by European and other settlers that have impacted the original inhabitants of this land. We extend our respect to citizens of these First Nations People who live here and their ancestors who have lived here for over five hundred generations, and to all Indigenous people.

We also know that this acknowledgement is insufficient. It does not undo the harm that has been done and continues to be perpetrated now against Indigenous people, their land, air and water.

July Birthdays

Peter Frazier	1
Hermiz Mikhael	1
Kathy Binoniemi	2
Lin Frazier	16
Toni Landick	20
Betty Komula	25
Claude DeYoung-Patrie	26
Trudy Gray	26
Kim Carpenter	30

Prayer Service to End Gun Violence

Let us Pray:

God Creator of all that is good we pray to you as we come together recognizing that we must turn to your ways to bring an end to the devastation brought about by the weapons we use against ourselves and others.

Most holy God, source of all being, of all hope, of all life, we confess our worship of unholy things fashioned not by you, but by our own hands,
Have mercy on us.

We confess our fascination with guns and weapons that have for far too long claimed the lives of the undefended, the vulnerable, and especially young people who have been wounded and killed in acts of random terror in a nation founded on the promise to protect life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.
Have mercy on us.

We confess our attachment to the means of violence and bloodshed claiming that they alone can protect and save us from those who wish us harm.
Have mercy on us.

We confess that we have not kept our eyes from watching what is worthless, allowing the imagination of our hearts to be misshapen by media, film, games, and public leaders that glorify violence and trivialize the dignity of human life.
Have mercy on us.

We confess our lack of courage and clarity in public policies that too often weigh individual rights over the common well-being.
Have mercy on us.

We confess how we have too often appealed to your name and that of the name of Jesus to justify our right to defend and protect, even when you gave up your defenses and even died on the cross to rise and again, destroying the powers of sin and death.
Have mercy on us.

We confess how we have allowed the gods of merchandising, consumerism and profiteering to drown out the cries of the injured and the grieving.
Have mercy on us.

We confess how the epidemic of gun deaths among brothers and sisters in black, indigenous and LGBT-Q communities in our society are mostly overlooked, ignored, and even accepted.
Have mercy on us.

We confess that we have ascribed to the easy lie that “the only thing that can stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun” when what we need are more loving households, more caring neighbors, better funded and equipped schools, and hearts that hear your Gospel message of love and forgiveness.
Have mercy on us.

O Blessed God of our deliverance, unfetter us all from the grip of the unholy trinity of poverty, prejudices, and guns.
Good Lord, deliver us.

O Blessed Spirit of the prophets, if we cannot shout in the streets in our agony and rage, guide us to have the honest difficult conversations about what truly drives our fears. Protect the voices of the youth whom you have called to speak the truth to the powerful and content.
Good Shepherd, lead us.

Oh, Giver of Breath, teach us to find that the only weapons we truly need are the swords of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation.
Most Holy One, defend us.

Creator of Resurrection, show us that by peacefully and boldly dwelling in your Holy Name of I AM, the militias of hatred and fear will step back and fall to the ground.

O Christ, hear us and raise us.

We raise our prayers for those lives taken by gun violence through suicide, and also for those lives taken through accidental shootings, especially when those shootings involve young people. Console and strengthen those whose despair is great.

Creator of Life, comfort our broken hearts with your love and hope.

We raise our prayers in remembrance of all people impacted by gun violence, as gun violence knows no boundaries but can affect all nationalities, races, cultures, faiths, genders, and socioeconomic classes; it can affect us where we live, where we worship, where we work, where we study, and where we play.

God of Love, transform our broken hearts.

We raise our prayers for those who have committed acts of gun violence and for their families, throughout our nation and especially in Michigan. We remember those suffering from mental illness who have gone untreated, and those suffering from loneliness and isolation. We pray for those who would use guns to reconcile differences, choosing power and violence rather than respect and dignity toward all human life. Grant us the strength to pursue justice with a voice of love.

God of Forgiveness, enlighten our broken hearts.

We raise our prayers for all community leaders and elected officials. We pray especially for the young adult leaders of anti-violence movements. Give them insight, wisdom, and courage to address head on the epidemic of gun violence. Pour forth your Spirit on all our neighborhoods and break the chains of violence that bind your people.

God of Power, strengthen our broken hearts.

We pray today for ourselves and for others in our lives who have been touched by gun violence. During the silent pause, I invite you to offer the names (either silently or aloud) of those for whom you pray.

God of Astonishing Mercy, Compassion and Immeasurable Love, restore our broken hearts and enliven our confidence to find new ways to revive our world to become one of peace. Amen

Help us, O Spirit,

Not to flirt with forces so ancient and so evil.

Rather let us put our trust in you that justice never bends to fear nor freedom to false gods of power.

(Steven Charleston, Spirit Wheel)

Give us courage for the facing of this hour. Guide us by the bright vision of your Heavenly Realm where no weapon is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love.

Oh, Spirit Creator of all we put our trust in you. Amen

Let us go forth in peace reflecting the justice and love of Jesus. Thanks be to God.

Written by the Rt. Rev. A. Robert Hirschfeld, Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire

(Lent 2018) Adapted by Virginia Mannisto & Katie Chipman-Bergsma, Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan.

A portion of the liturgy is adapted from Moral Call: a Vermont Interfaith Prayer and Remembrance Vigil, December 15, 2015 Adapted for use of Prayer service by Virginia Mannisto & Katie Chipman-Bergsma 2025

Red Dress Closing Prayer

Creator, hear our voices. We gather with heavy hearts, calling out for justice, for truth, for the return of all missing and murdered relatives. Too many have been taken, and too many of us have looked away. We ask you to stir the hearts of those who have ignored the cries, to unsettle the ones who benefit from silence, and to call all people into the sacred work of reckoning.

Hold us in the weight of this grief, but do not let us stay there. Give us the courage to face the truth of stolen lives, broken systems, and a world that has long deemed people expendable. Let this truth break open what must be broken so that something just and whole can be built in its place.

May the red we wear be more than a symbol. May it be a mirror, forcing reflection. May it be a wound, demanding lament. May it be a fire, igniting action. Let it burn away indifference and call forth transformation.

The red dress is more than fabric—it is an indictment, a prayer, and a promise. We will not stop speaking the names of those taken. We will not stop demanding justice from systems built to erase us. We will not stop until every relative is accounted for until every loss is acknowledged until every life is honored.

Creator, move us beyond words and into action. Let accountability be our offering. Let truth-telling be our worship. Let justice be the path we walk until every stolen relative is home. Amen.

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August Messenger deadline
is
Friday, July 25, 6:00 p.m.



The Messenger Team

Editor Meg Goodrich

Copy Editor - Jane Ryan

Lay-out - Jim Edwards

Reporter - Bob Railey

Copier - Sierra Larson



Prayers for Those Affected by Gun Violence

June 27th at Noon

SAVE A LIFE, TAKE A LOCK, CALL FOR HELP

Rural areas in Michigan, especially in the Upper Peninsula, have higher suicide rates due to a combination of factors including limited access to mental health resources, economic challenges, and higher rates of gun ownership.

Sadly, guns have become the leading cause of death for children in the United States. Safe storage is a practical solution that can dramatically reduce youth firearm injuries and deaths, including suicides. For example, when Florida introduced a strict safe storage law, youth firearm deaths went down 51%. Michigan's new safe storage law requires that all firearms in homes with children be securely stored. Read on to find out the details.

Safe storage can also prevent young people who may be struggling with suicidal thoughts from accessing a firearm. Homes that safely store their firearms have a 78% percent lower risk of self-inflicted firearm injuries and an 85% lower risk of unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens, compared to those that locked neither. Sadly, guns are the deadliest method used in suicide, resulting in death in 85% of attempts. For comparison, suicide by drug overdose is lethal 3% of the time. By keeping firearms safely stored, we can also reduce gun theft. Approximately 200,000 guns are stolen every year, many of which are later used in crimes. Safe storage can also prevent young people from accessing firearms to use in crimes or school shootings.

The Extreme Risk Protection Order can remove firearms from a situation, reduce the threat of violence, and create an opportunity for people in crisis to get the help they need. These are filed by Family, Roommates or Domestic Partners, Law Enforcement, and Mental Health Professionals. All petitions need to be approved by a judge.

Firearm Suicide in Michigan

5X

Males were over five times as likely to die by gun suicide than females.

57%

White males over the age of 34 accounted for 22% of the population in Michigan but nearly 57% of all gun suicide deaths in 2022.

44%

Nearly 44% of all gun suicide deaths in 2022 were over the age of 54.

1,504 Gun Deaths in Michigan

Based on most recent available finalized data from CDC (2022).

842 WERE SUICIDES = 56%

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SAVE A LIFE, TAKE A LOCK, CALL FOR HELP

Gun violence costs Michiganders

\$16.2 billion annually.

Firearm Suicide in Michigan