

# THE MESSENGER

JANUARY, 2022

## From The Rev. Rick Swenson

As I write this missive, we are rapidly approaching that most sacred of days when we will celebrate the birth of our Savior. But celebration of the Incarnation is more than one day: it is a season. It is a unique season of expectancy and hope. It can be divided into three periods: Advent a time of WAITING; the COMING, Christmas Eve and Christmas itself; and on into LIVING THE SEASON, the Feast of the Epiphany.

The Christian community has celebrated the extended Christmas season for centuries. The Feast of the Nativity itself first emerged as a separate observance in the fourth century in the Western (Latin) Church celebrated on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December according to the usage of the Christian community in Rome. The season of Advent and the penitential tone and spirit of that season developed later in the Latin Church. In the Eastern Christian (Orthodox) Church the Feast of Epiphany on January 6<sup>th</sup> was often associated with the Nativity. Some groups of Eastern Christians still celebrate Christmas on that day.

This entire season of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, in fact our entire lives, are marked by vigil. The vigil we begin in Advent and keep throughout this entire season of Christmas and Epiphany has its true beginning long before any of us are born. It begins in the season before seasons, before the emergent cosmos exploded into being. It has its beginning in the heart of God. And so we must begin there as well.

The ancient desert dwellers of our early Christian communities tell us that the surest way into the heart of God is to be still. In being still we learn to be attentive to the vast and

hidden stillness that permeates all things. In that primordial stillness beats the heart of God.

There is a correspondence between our hearts and God's. They have imprinted on them the same unimaginable hope, sealed with a

promise. The hope is for fullness, for completion, for being one with each other. What that will be like is hidden from us. The end and fullness of all things is known only to God. But we have glimpses of it and those glimpses stagger us with their inexpressible beauty. We are tormented with teasing reminders by the restlessness of our desires, by the almost painful depth of our longings, by our ardent seeking for something more.

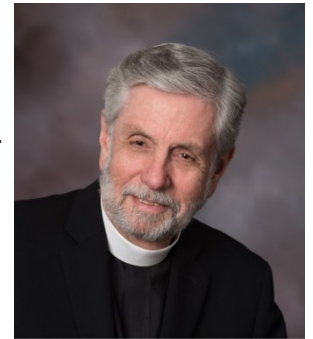
Our entire lives are a vigil, a keeping watch, for the fulfillment of this hope. All creation holds vigil with us, as it has done since the beginning. All generations before us and those that come after us will hold it as well.

But it is especially in this season of the church year, during Advent and Christmas, the season of the Coming, that we rise up on tiptoe to dance. We open our throats to sing and to proclaim this vigil that we keep. As we do, we share the solemn, ageless vigil being kept by all creation. We enter the hearts of one another as, in stillness, we listen for the divine heartbeat.

We wait for the fullness. We watch for the completion of the promise. We keep vigil for the coming of the unimaginable fruition of the seed growing from the beginning in the heart of God.

Therefore, during this season of expectancy and hope, let us all pray together:

*O God of peace, who has taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be our strength: By the might of your Spirit lift us, we pray you, to your presence, where we may be still and know that you are God; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen (BCP p. 832)*



Faithfully,

The Rev. Rick Swenson

# ECMIN Dwelling in Scripture

## Dwelling in Scripture Together as a Diocesan Household 2021-2022

You are invited to join together with the whole diocesan household to dwell in scripture together this year. We have selected a text for each season and ask that every meeting or other gathering in the diocese begin with either Dwelling in the Word or Gospel-Based Discipleship using the text for that season.

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*As we move through this year of dwelling in scripture together, may God form us more fully into the image of God's son Jesus, so that everything we do together might point to God's dream of Beloved Community, and so that we might witness boldly that there is no greater force for change and healing in the heavens or earth than the fountain of God's endless love.*

### Gospel-Based Discipleship Instructions

1. One person reads the entire passage appointed for the current season out loud. Consider and discuss the question: *What word(s), idea(s), or sentence(s) stand out to you?*
2. Read the passage again. Consider and discuss the question: *What is Jesus/the passage saying to you?*
3. Read the passage a third time. Consider and discuss the question: *What is Jesus/the passage calling you to do?*

*Adapted from: A Disciple's Prayer Book*

Learn more at [episcopalmn.org/discipleship](https://episcopalmn.org/discipleship)

### Epiphany

Mark 1:9-11

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. 11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved;[a] with you I am well pleased."

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## From Your Vestry

Greetings from your wardens and vestry! We have continued to meet via Zoom as the local and regional case rates for Covid remained high. I'm thankful for the care taken by the people of St. Paul's to protect one another: masking, distancing, out-of-doors gathering, and giving up our coffee hour fellowship for the time being. It's a lot to ask after nearly two years, but I have faith it will not be forever.

We welcomed our retired Assisting Priest, Barb Elliott, back to the pulpit this Advent season... and I have to say how blessed we are to also welcome her back into our midst! She has graciously agreed to advise our new Interim Rector and Deacon Pat, as well as our Pastoral Care team, on how this critical work has been successfully managed in the past. I hope we see Barb and Tom Elliott worshipping among us again on a regular basis!

Our rector search team has shared reports of their progress and a proposed timeline for completing the parish profile, sending it to the diocese to begin the candidate solicitation, candidate application review and interviews; a process that could reach the end goal of calling our new permanent rector by late spring. This is an ambitious timeline, to be sure, but I am so impressed with the reports I hear about how well this group is functioning and working together for St. Paul's future. Please take a moment to say a prayer for their discernment process and ask that the Holy Spirit continue to guide their important work.

A small group of us met in early December to discuss Communications needs, including the Messenger, email and social media along with our parish website serving as our window on St. Paul's for the world around us – and especially potential rector candidates. We will be making some changes to our site in January to support the search and “freshen up” the look and clarity of our pages. And we welcome any of you who are interested and have experience in this kind of work – please reach out to Rita

or myself if you would like to lend a hand!

Part of the vestry's work during transition, as you have heard us say many times, is to review and reexamine our ways of conducting the business of the parish. We have updated employee policies, deliberated over organizational structure and lay ministry work, and are now having a hard look at the parish by-laws – which have not been updated since 2005. Our Interim Rector, the Rev. Rick Swenson, will be working with the vestry to do a major update and streamlining of our bylaws to bring to the parish for approval in early 2022.

In December we focused on establishing our 2022 operating budget, with nearly as many “unknowns” and uncertainties remaining as those we had grappled with in creating our 2021 budget. I have been consistently amazed and grateful to the people of St. Paul's for your robust giving and for staying so current with pledges during 2021...but am concerned and puzzled at the slow inflow of pledges for the new year. We are dramatically behind in both numbers of pledges and amount of pledged income, which makes it really difficult to prepare a fiscally responsible operating budget that reflects our values and priorities. Please fill out and submit a pledge card if you have not yet done so! We have much work yet to do...and we want to be able to share good news and continued

optimism about our future at our budget forum (January 16) and annual meeting (January 30) this month.



Peace,  
Nancy Schuldt,  
Senior Warden

# Live Nativity

Live Nativity took place on Sunday, December 19.  
Special thanks to Nat Constance for coordinating so many of the details and supporting this youth project.

*Photos courtesy of Holly Hansen*



## From Your Nominating Committee

The following person is nominated to serve on Vestry:

### **Timothy Metcalfe**

St. Paul's has been a part of my life since I was four years old. The warm and welcoming community within is one of the many reasons St. Paul's has maintained its place in my heart. Through every stage of my life so far, whether it be work, school, or my own creative endeavors, St. Paul's and its wonderful community have always been there for me. I am excited at the possibility of offering my thoughts and experiences to the Vestry team. St. Paul's is a place of worship, gathering, and love, which I have always been honored to be a part. I believe I can help St. Paul's further its outreach and mission and I look forward to learning from the Vestry as well. Thank you for your consideration.

**NOTE: The Nominating Committee is still working to identify more candidates to fill the pending vestry vacancies. We will share that information as soon as it is available. Further information will be posted on the bulletin board next to the Sacristy.**

Please let us know if this service opportunity is something you would be interested in doing on behalf of St. Paul's.

*Respectfully submitted by the Nominating Committee:*

- Jason Butcher
- Angie Shambour
- Don Pederson
- Jay Austin

## From Your Search Committee

How do you solve a problem like Maria? How do you solve a problem like searching for a new rector? When you realize Maria isn't a problem and a new rector opens doors to the future. Search Committee members are laying the foundations for the search. The first step in our process is completing ECMN's ministry portfolio. Guided by the portfolio's questions, we've given prayerful thought to describing the essence of who we are as a parish and what the parish is to us and to the community. Like the 12 blind people who each describe an elephant, each of us knows St. Paul's through our perceptions and experiences. The summary of comments from Faith in our Future gatherings serves as a road map. We will complete our work on the portfolio so that Vestry can review it in January. When the portfolio is submitted to ECMN, news of our search will go out to all the world.

We want each of you to be involved in this search throughout the process. We'll give an update one Sunday each month during service. Members of the committee will stand at the back of the sanctuary following service each Sunday. Please talk to us. Ask us questions. Tell us what's important to you about a new rector. As we pray each Sunday, we await the leader God has chosen for us. It's exciting to think about who that will be! We ask that you pray for those of us on the search committee, that we hear God's voice through the candidate's voices.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Dragich, Chair*

Deadline for submissions to the  
February issue of *The Messenger* is  
8:00 am, Tuesday, January 18, 2022.

Please email items to:

[office@stpaulsduluth.org](mailto:office@stpaulsduluth.org)

## Outreach Ministry

Deacon Pat and seven parishioners enjoyed an Outreach Ministry discussion via Zoom call on December 2. Everyone is welcome to join our next discussion, via zoom, at 12:00 noon until 1:00 pm, on Thursday, January 13, 2022. Zoom link posted here. The pass-word for church Zoom meetings is 1710.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
Carol Andrews

Topic: Outreach Meeting  
Time: Jan 13, 2022 12:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)  
Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81863428500?pwd=U1|tcGZYUndFa09hK3Vnd0E2R2dVUT09>  
Meeting ID: 818 6342 8500  
Passcode: 1710  
One tap mobile  
+13126266799,,81863428500#,,,,\*1710# US (Chicago)  
Meeting ID: 818 6342 8500  
Passcode: 1710

## Lost Treasures from the Archives

### AWAIT COMING OF YEAR AT CHURCH

Members of St. Paul's Hear  
Greetings by Rev. Dr.  
Webster.

Opening with the minor and major litany at 11 o'clock, members of St. Paul's Episcopal church under the direction of Rev. Dr. A. W. Ryan last night conducted a watch night service, the choir singing "Onward, Christian Soldiers," as the clock was striking the midnight hour.

Following the litany Dr. Ryan read the lesson from Ecclesiastes XII, "Remember Thy Creator in the Days of Thy Youth." He followed this with a brief address based on the scriptural quotation, "Then Cometh the End." He said that the good, with its opportunities, has passed, urging his hearers to look forward more diligently to that which is worthy in the year to come, being thankful that the bad also has passed.

After the singing, Dr. Ryan recited the apostolic creed; Dr. Webster, pastor of the Lakeside Episcopal church, offered the New Year's greeting. The service closed with a prayer and benediction.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
Bob Silverness

# From Your Bookkeeper

Dear Parishioners,

November financials were presented at the December 2021 Vestry meeting. Here is a summary of the November **General Fund** Statement of Activities.



November update of 2021 pledges:

Pledge income received in November 2021	\$44,351
YTD 2021 pledge income as of November 30, 2021	\$345,761
YTD budgeted pledge income as of November 30, 2021	\$326,315
Variance of actual to budget pledge income as of November 30, 2021.	\$ 19,446

Actual Income over Expenses to date:

YTD income as of November 30, 2021	\$427,992
YTD expense as of November 30, 2021	<u>\$436,441</u>
YTD income over expense November 30, 2021	\$ -8,449

YTD **budgeted** income over expenses through November 30, 2021 \$ -31,206

This means that we are doing \$22,757 better than budgeted due to reduced expenses and increased giving.

Please help us carry out your wishes. If you will note in the memo section of your check the fund to which your donation should be credited, we will be able to determine where your gift should go. Unless otherwise noted, pledge payments will first be applied to 2021, until paid in full, and then to 2022. If you would like your gifts included on your 2021 year end statement, please have them in the office by 9:00 am, Thursday, December 30, 2021 or in the December 26, 2021 Sunday offering plate. Here is a chart that outlines the IRS guidelines we need to follow to determine the tax year credited for your contribution.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please call the office 218-724-3535 or email me at [bookkeeper@stpaulsduluth.org](mailto:bookkeeper@stpaulsduluth.org)

Christine Melone,  
Bookkeeper

TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION	REPORT FOR 2021	REPORT FOR 2022
Checks written in December 2021 and deposited in church offering in January 2022		X
Checks written and deposited in church offering in January 2022, but "backdated" to December 2021		X
Checks written and deposited in church offering in December 2021, but "postdated" to January 2022		X
Checks written in December 2021 and deposited in the mail and postmarked in December 2021, but not received by the church until January 2022	X	
Checks written in December 2021 and deposited in the mail in December 2021 but not postmarked until January 2022, and not received by the church until January 2022		X

## The Deacon's Stoop



I'm writing this the week of Advent 4, Monday, Year B. It is my practice to pray Morning Prayer, and this morning the assigned gospel readings brought me to Luke. Let me share a bit of Eugene Peterson's introduction to the gospel:

Most of us, most of the time, feel left out – misfits. We don't belong. Others seem to be so confident, so sure of themselves, "insiders" who know the ropes, old hands in a club from which we are excluded.

One of the ways we have of responding to this is to form our own club, or join one that will have us. Here is at least one place where we are "in" and the others "out." The clubs range from informal to formal in gatherings that are variously political, social, cultural, and economic. But the one thing they have in common is the principle of exclusion. Identity or worth is achieved by excluding all but the chosen. The terrible price we pay for keeping all those other people out so that we can savor the sweetness of being insiders is a reduction of reality, a shrinkage of life.

Nowhere is this price more terrible than when it is paid in the cause of religion. But religion has a long history of doing just that, of reducing the huge mysteries of God to the respectability of club rules, of shrinking the vast human community to a "membership." But with God there are no outsiders.

Luke is a most vigorous champion of the outsider. An outsider himself, the only Gentile in an all-Jewish cast of New Testament writers, he shows how Jesus includes those who typically were treated as outsiders by the religious establishment of the day: women, common laborers (shepherders), the racially different (Samaritans), the poor. He will not countenance religion as a club. As Luke tells the story, all of us who have found ourselves on the outside looking in on life with no hope of gaining entrance (and who of us hasn't felt it?) now find the doors wide open, found and welcomed by God in Jesus.

Who among us hasn't felt it? Pause for a moment and think of the filters you've encountered in life, by birth (family), education (alumni of school or degrees earned), occupation (team of co-workers, associations, part of a

company), by hobby (guilds, leagues, clubs), economic class (neighborhood, activities reserved for those with resources, a Broadway play). There are continuums presented by most of these filters.

Which schools did you attend, and what is the highest level attained? For some, a high school diploma is a major achievement. In the family I was born to, my parents were very wise but never made it through 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

These exclusionary filters can be present on either end of the continuum. In my family of origin, graduating high school was to be achieved but college was thinking too highly of ourselves (two of eight are college educated). Striving for economic security is a worthy goal, but how many of you know exactly what I mean by the words "the One Percent?" Family has been described by "the place where you can always go home to and they have to take you in," but we also have "the black sheep of the family." Being taken in this context doesn't imply with an open heart, and many of us know of situations where "tough love" means keeping those doors closed to the child who has become addicted and refuses treatment, who has stolen from those most dear because the next fix was desperately dearer.

Culture in America is shifting, and some of us welcome a deeper understanding of our culpability in being part of the club that kept others out, while some of us defend our rightful place being the insiders – often established by our ancestors while we continue to reap the benefits.

Don't misread me here. Healthy boundaries are important. For about two weeks we had a woman who was living in her car parked in St. Paul's lot. She was calling me multiple times every day, and when two days in a row included calls between 10 and midnight I had to establish some boundaries. I want to distinguish between boundaries on *behaviors* vs. boundaries on *who we've decided to love*.

There are a lot of decisions being made in Duluth today that Luke would have words about. There are 1321 households living homeless in this city, and 600+ people living unsheltered. We have 155 shelter beds in the city, the Warming Center is operating at maximum capacity – early in the season, and it isn't even really cold yet. An encampment by the easternmost tunnel was cleared last week, folks had a 48-hour notice but weren't gone when

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authorities arrived. That isn't easy for *anyone*. For those living there, where are they to go? Those tasked with breaking up that encampment are also sick at heart, understanding the health and public safety concerns, but also wondering where they are to go?

What image comes first to your mind when I describe someone as homeless? Are they welcome in our neighborhoods? Which filter do we put firmly in place to determine who we would welcome to live on St. Paul's church campus? Which filter do I want to use in deciding who should be allowed to hang out in the business district downtown, sleeping in the Skywalk, in Canal Park or around Leif Erickson? Who do I want camping in the woods by *my* house, wandering through *my* yard?

Most of the households living homeless in this city are folks with some social capital left to them, and are "couch-surfing", living with friends or family until they can get housing. Even with a voucher for

assistance for affordable housing, the wait list in Duluth is long and the supply of eligible properties scarce; those who qualify wait an average of 14 months to get housed. But for those living unsheltered in places unfit for human habitation (like a car or tent) or lucky enough to score one of the shelter beds in Duluth, there is usually no social glue left. They aren't surrounded by loving families with the means to offer support, don't have friends who can offer a couch for them to crash until things get better. While I wear a smart watch to track my steps, the average homeless person walks 13 miles per day just to get to three meal sites, to appointments for services, find clean clothes, and a place to safely spend the night, where sleep *might* be part of the equation.

Does the person who is chronically struggling with acute substance abuse disorder and severe untreated mental illness deserve to freeze to death? Housing First means giving someone a room with a key to at least provide the security of shelter, which is necessary before they can succeed in rehab or treatment for mental illness. Community First goes to the heart of what Luke talks about in the gospel. Community First models create in-

tentional, healthy circles of support around the person without anyone, and around each of us, where all together can find "the doors wide open, found and welcomed by God in Jesus." Who among us doesn't long for this for ourselves? If we love our neighbors as ourselves, how do we offer this same sense of belonging to those who have burned any social capital they might have had, struggling to merely survive in our community? We have institutionalized "charity" in our culture. Before the first monasteries were built with a guest house, individual households offered food and shelter to

strangers. After the monks built the guesthouse, when someone approached for help they were given directions to go see the monks. In Duluth, we have built CHUM to provide these services. I've had homeless people live with me, kids who had been kicked out of their homes. Most of us probably respond with a room to those we love who find themselves in crisis. Hebrews 13 instructs us to "stay on good terms with each other, held

together by love. Be ready with a meal or a bed when it's needed. Why, some have extended hospitality to angels without ever knowing it! Regard prisoners as if you were in prison with them. Look on victims of abuse as if what happened to them had happened to you." (*The Message*)

If Mary and Joseph, or Jesus and his disciples, knocked on my door today, would I say "There's no room in the Inn?" Imagine if instead we could say, "Welcome home!" Visit [SteppingOnUpDuluth.org](http://SteppingOnUpDuluth.org) to learn what how we

can open the doors wide to those strangers among us, to be the love of Jesus in our community, to heal the whole world with love.



Respectfully submitted,  
Deacon Patricia Benson

Email: [Deacon@stpaulsduluth.org](mailto:Deacon@stpaulsduluth.org)

Phone: 218-724-3535

## Annual Meeting and Budget Forum

Please don't miss our Annual Meeting and Budget Forum in the Parish Hall and available on Zoom as well!

- Sunday, January 16 — Budget Forum
- Sunday, January 30 — Annual Meeting



All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

### Items Due for Annual Report

In preparation for our Annual Meeting, we are compiling the 2021 Annual Report. All Committee Chairs and Ministry Leaders are requested to submit their annual updates by **Friday, January 14**, to the Parish Office at [office@stpaulsduluth.org](mailto:office@stpaulsduluth.org) Thank you for your cooperation!

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## New Music Director

It's official – St. Paul's has a new Music Director! Brian Copple will be moving to Duluth from Camberwell, Australia, early in the new year, to take on our music ministry. We are so pleased to have a musician (organist and choral instructor) of this caliber joining our parish staff and working to rebuild and revitalize this important aspect of our worship and spiritual practice. From his application cover letter:

“Donald Neuen, emeritus professor of choral studies at UCLA, always said, "Our God is the original inspiration for music and offering it in His name brings you one step closer to Him." I have carried that inspiration with me and through my music ministry have always worked hard, so that the service music fills the hearts of the congregation and they leave the church feeling joyful and thankful to God. I believe an innovative worship service is enhanced by excellence in singing by the worship leaders, choir and congregation, and with the strong support of keyboards and instrumentalists.

Some of my previous music ministry highlights range from conducting Handel's "Messiah", to directing Menotti's opera "Amahl and the Night Visitors" to sold-out audiences, as well as multiple performances of Marty Haugen's "Tales of Wonder". These productions were possible thanks to music staff teamwork and the talents of the congregations I worked with, and delivered extremely rewarding experiences.”

If you would like a “taste” of his performance and choral director repertoire, here are some links to examples he provided us before his interview: [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ilo9t8vrm1gmu2w/AAAHu5\\_XeLluhRH0EAZLmOaGa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ilo9t8vrm1gmu2w/AAAHu5_XeLluhRH0EAZLmOaGa?dl=0)

*Respectfully submitted by,*

*Nancy Schuldt,  
Senior Warden*

## LAY MINISTRY SCHEDULE –JANUARY 2022

Please find a sub if you are unavailable for your scheduled date.

	January 2	January 9	January 16	January 23	January 30
ALTAR GUILD	K LEONARD	C CONRAD	J MARINAC	J JARNIS	J JARNIS
	S Cox	S Anderson	J Elliott	R Ballou-Buck	R Ballou-Buck
	J Harvey	S Hall	A Gustafson	D Kolquist	D Kolquist
	L Hultkrantz	A Sadowski	C Miller	A Schliep	A Schliep
LECTOR	K Smith	Z Stodola	M Gustafson	J Pastor	S Stromquist
LIVESTREAM	R & H Lyle	J Austin	D Clanaugh	J Austin	J Austin
USHERS	M & S Brown	R Lyle	D Morin	C & B Dinan	M & S Brown
	D Kolquist	P Waite	K Swanson	G Olson	D Kolquist
		M Gustafson	D Barthel	P Enenbach	
LOCK UP	M Brown	C Fellman	D Pederson	T Diener	J Austin

### Altar Guild Other Duties for January:

#### January Linens:

L Hultkrantz, Z Stodola;  
Subs: C Conrad, C Miller

### Jan/Feb Brass Cleaning:

C Miller, S Hall, K Buck, M Fegley

### Weekly Team Subs:

G Bouschor, E Killen

## Giving Tree and Holiday Cookies

Thank you for your ongoing support of our neighbors in the Twin Ports community! Your generosity was heart-warming! Special gratitude to Sue & Mark Brown for organizing the Giving Tree this year.

Sue & Mark also cut out, baked and packaged **hundreds** of sugar cookies in Christmas shapes, accompanied by icing and sprinkles, to give the residents at Steve O'Neil Apartments a fun Christmas-cookie decorating experience!

We will accept donations of hats, scarves and mittens to our Giving Warmth Line in the parish front yard throughout the winter. Thank you!





St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
1710 E. Superior St.  
Duluth, MN 55812

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**Visit our website:**  
[www.stpaulsduluth.org](http://www.stpaulsduluth.org)

“If, as Herod, we fill our lives with things; if we consider ourselves so important that we must fill every moment of our lives with action, when will we have the time to make the long, slow journey across the desert as did the Magi? Or brood over the

coming of the child as did Mary? For each of us, there is a desert to travel. A star to discover. And a being within ourselves to bring to life.”

(Author unknown).

