ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, DULUTH, MN

THE MESSENGER

NOVEMBER, 2023

A Joyful Faith Matters

At the beginning of October, St. Paul's hosted our annual animal blessing in honor of St. Francis of Assisi. The church was full of holy chaos and a great deal of joy. Margaret Thomas and I blessed at least 29 animals that day, and many others in photos, which were brought by people young and old to be celebrated. It was an incredibly festive occasion—one which I won't forget for a long time!

The kind of joy and fun that we have in worship is one way in which I am profoundly grateful to be a part of this community. I give thanks that I get to serve a church that approaches worship with such a fun-loving spirit. October's blessing of the dogs, cats, bunnies, rats, and even reptiles is just one way in which we practice a faith rooted in joy and blessing. God declares all these things good, takes delight in them, and invites us to the party.

We also practice a faith rooted in joy when we gather together to celebrate the birthdays of our members, when we invite all people forward to communion, and when we host diocesan youth gatherings at St. Paul's. All these things and more have been happening here in October!

I believe that this kind of faith has a powerful impact on the world around us. We are pointing to joy and blessing in a world that too often tells us that it's all doom, gloom, and failure. When we are formed by God's joy in this church, we bring that light to others in our workplaces, families, schools, and the places we volunteer. What we do here matters, and how we do it matters, too.

Throughout October, we have been discussing giving and our fundraising efforts for 2024. Over the last month, you have heard extensively from me, our annual giving team, and parish leaders about the value of this ministry in our own lives. Jenny Keto, Kathleen Smith, Jim Ransom, Terry Roberts, and Agnes Barthel all reflected on why St. Paul's matters to them. As someone who is still relatively new here, I was



delighted and inspired to hear all of their reflections.

October 29 was Commitment Sunday, and if you joined us and turned in a pledge card that day, I am very grateful to you. If you are still discerning how you can give to this community of joy, welcome, and love, I encourage you to return a pledge card in the next few weeks. All of us together make the ministry of this parish possible. If you need help understanding what sorts of things we need to do to reach our goal, please see pages 9-10, along with the Annual Giving team's monthly reflection. I am deeply grateful for their efforts this year. We are learning together, so please share your feedback on how the campaign is going with us so we can continue to make improvements for next year.

Peace,

Maggie, Rector

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What can we learn about giving history at St. Paul's and at other similar-sized churches?

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Lost Treasures from the Archives

Printed in the Duluth paper on November 2, 1914:

SEES PROPHECIES OF GLORY IN THE SAINTS

"Our Visions of Them Indicate Revelations to Come," Says Dr. A. W. Ryan.

"All Saints' day is one of the most human of the festivals," said Rev. Dr. A. W. Ryan of St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal church in his sermon yesterday. The day was observed generally by Protestant Episcopal churches. "We have today a set day for the memory of our saints, to think of them as victors over life's troubles and pains and disappointments.

"Jules Verne had visions of aeroplanes and submarines and now these very inventions have been playing an important part in the great war not far from his home. So our visions of the saints are the prophecies of the greater glory that shall be revealed in them, when we see them eye to eye in God's abounding hereafter.

"We think of them not so much with a sense of our great loss as with the idea of their great gain; we think of them as models of the virtues that we should be eager to cultivate and multiply within ourselves."

> Respectfully submitted, Bob Silverness



Please remember to set your clocks back one hour before you go to bed on Saturday, November 4, 2023

The Deacon's Stoop

I grew up in a family of ten on a dairy farm. In the rush of juggling all the pieces of our life together, there were specific events that I learned to treasure.

During the growing season, Dad was in the field and I replaced him in the barn with Mom. It took about three hours, twice a day, to milk our herd. This was time we filled with stories of the past, sharing the present, and exploring the future.

With Dad, these special times found us sitting in the dark in winter, watching the wildlife out the front windows and discussing news of the world. Mom was a lark, Dad a night owl, and these conversations continued throughout my adult life every time I went home to visit. Mom would have the coffee on by 5 am, long after the cows had been sold and didn't require such an early start. Dad would sleep until the sun was up, but wouldn't turn in until well into the night. I would find precious hours with them on either end of a day filled with catching up with siblings and our growing extended family. We'd start in the kitchen preparing a feast for a crowd, chatting about our lives and families. We'd continue around the table, sitting long afterwards with a cup of coffee, before returning to the kitchen sink with soapsuds and dishtowels. These were the special events of home, changing a bit over the years but always including deep conversations that sometimes grew heated, but we listened to each other and sought to understand. Family.



In September a group of us gathered in the Olcott Room around a quilting frame to stitch a 50-year commemorative quilt to be raffled at Chum's Golden Gala. The whole process was fun, but those of us who gathered to stitch together discovered the gift of time and

presence to get to know each other as we listened and shared our stories. We treasured the experience so much, we plan to do it again! We want to start a quilt in January, and to pace it a bit when we aren't working on such a tight deadline. A couple months ago I reflected on the surgeon general's report on the impact of loneli-

ness on our health. Join us around the quilt - it's good for your heart!

Another way we've gathered is to watch a movie together. In October we watched Pride, a 2014 British film about striking Welsh coal miners and a group of gay and



lesbian activists from London recognizing their shared interests, standing in solidarity with each other, and developing wonderful friendships as they grew to know each other. Nat Constance invited me to a UMD production of Spitfire Grill, and we both think it would make a great movie to offer at St. Paul's. Watch for an announcement as we settle on a date and time, and join us for another small group gathering within the St. Paul's community.

Small groups are meeting to study the Gospel of Luke for 12 weeks: six before Advent, and six before Lent. This is another opportunity for us to get to know each other better, and to deepen our St. Paul's family ties. We just started the week of October 22, so if you are interested there is still time to sign up! Just call me at 218-206-5349 and we can discuss what day and time works for you.



Another get-together, Chum's Fall Assembly, lands on November 16. We will gather at First Lutheran Church from 6:30-

8 pm with clergy and delegates from member congregations. Come learn more about how these congregations are engaging in shared ministry with our neighbors struggling to survive in Duluth. The Interfaith Thanksgiving service is hosted by Pilgrim Congregational Church this year on Tuesday, November 21, at 7:00 pm. The offering goes to support our work together as Chum.

On December 9 we have two more opportunities to gather!

Gloria Dei will host Chum's annual Christmas Cookie Bake-off! We prepare our favorite recipes to share with those who are not with their loved ones over the Christmas holiday. This includes folks staying at the Warming Center, spending the holidays at St. Francis Apartments, or

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Gratitude, Momentum, and Frost!

Greetings from Sophie Gray Spehar, Faith Formation Coordinator. I'm sitting in the sunny office, wondering if this might be one of the final glory days of Fall. My kids, Arthur and Matilda, were excited about the frost this morning, and have already been talking about where they'd like to go sledding this winter. It's funny to think that by the time you read this, there might be ribs of snow covering the hillside, all the trees will be much barer, and the hats and gloves will be an everyday must.

After a beautiful Fall and a trip down south a few weeks back, I am not feeling ready to talk about Thanksgiving, and ADVENT!!! But, ready or not, here it comes! Things are starting to come together — I'm getting to know more kids and their families, and it's been a lot of fun. Here's what I can tell you about how to find out more:

Faith Formation Committee Meetings happen once a month: Thursday, November 16, 7 pm is the next time we will meet in person. Anyone who is interested can join these open meetings where events, volunteer needs, Children's Church, budget, and other formationrelated items are discussed. I also have started sending a weekly email update to those who wish to receive one or can't come to the in-person meeting. Please let me know if you'd like to be on the list by emailing me: kids@stpaulsduluth.org

Please keep an eye on the Faith Formation Bulletin Board by the main Sanctuary. It has essential forms and information for families looking to deepen their connection to our wonderful church community. This is a convenient way for you to keep abreast on what's happening here, and to communicate your interest in getting involved.

I am feverishly writing this on the eve of the first Diocesan Youth Event (DYE) to happen in the last four years. It's been so long since great young minds had the chance to convene! This weekend the Church will be alive with singing, dancing, playing, praying, and deep discussions. I am so looking for-



ward to being on the other end of one of these great events as an adult leader. I am hoping that this event allows for meaningful fellowship, and that it's only the beginning. This has definitely been a time of rebuilding and reflection as recovery after Covid continues. The kids and adults who have signed up to be here are part of a fresh start in the Episcopal Community in Minnesota. I feel privileged to be a part of it, and hope that we can make it great for everyone involved.

This past month, we have been talking about Saints and the three Ts: time, talent, and treasure. I am delighted to report that the kids at St. Paul's are all in (for the time and talent, anyway!). In November, we turn our hearts and minds to gratitude. I continue to be grateful for this wonderful group of open minded, jolly, intelligent, and deeply caring Episcopalians!

> Sophie Gray Spehar Faith Formation Coordinator

The Giving Tree Returns for Advent



Help us spread God's love to our neighbors by purchasing a new gift for the folks at Loaves & Fishes in our neighborhood, and for the women and children at Safe Haven Domestic Abuse Resource Center. A tree will be set up by Sunday, November 19, with tags describing a desired toy or gift. Please select one of these special tags, purchase the gift requested and return it unwrapped, with the tag attached, by **Sunday, December 3**. (If you'd like to put the item in a gift bag that is fine.) We will accept any type of nonviolent toy for infants through teens. A great gift idea for teens are gift cards to local stores. If you have questions, please contact Susan M. Anderson. Thank you!

Notes of a Different Kind...

November conjures warm feelings and fond memories for me. It happens to be my birthday month, but aside from that, memories of lengthening nights with the darkness increasing always made me feel safe and cozy from the outside world. Of course, with November comes the celebration of All Saints, the break in the long green season since last Pentecost where we remember those who have gone before us, specifically mentioning those who have died in the past year, and we rejoice in their lives of faith having been completed.

I have always loved the celebration of All Saints. At St. Paul's, we do all the high holidays with passion and faith, but I think All Saints is my favorite Sunday of the church year. It is when we celebrate with and for those who have gone before us and completed their journey of faith. We look to those who surround us as the great cloud of witnesses, and we lift their lives of faith up as examples for our own journey. Most of all, we sing: For all the saints who from their labors rest; all who by faith before the world confessed your name, O Jesus, be forever blessed. Alleluia! Not only that but as the bread and wine are blessed, we sing the hymn that has no end: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest! I don't

know about you, but I can almost hear them singing with us as we sing those words each Sunday. Listen closely. They're with us. They sing. They rejoice with us. Alleluia!



Peace,

Tom Hamilton, DMA Minister of Music

PS: For a beautiful choral setting of the Holy, Holy, search YouTube for Maurice Duruflé Requiem Sanctus. It is sung in Latin, but when the words *"in excelsis"* (in the highest) are sung, the music explodes! I think it is one of the most amazing moments in all of music, and I believe it is the music we will hear in heaven.

Experience More Organ!



Vestry Notes

St. Paul's Vestry met on Tuesday, October 17, 2023. Coming up this fall, October 29 will be our Commitment Sunday. This is the day we make our annual pledges for St. Paul's 2024 Annual Giving campaign. Pledge cards can be turned in on this day or before, and many will continue to come in for a while after. The Annual Giving team this year is headed up very ably by Kathy Leonard, John Pastor, Holly Hansen and Jim Ransom. Also coming up, we have All Saints Day in early November, and Advent beginning December 3.

Additionally, the Vestry along with the staff are addressing building issues relating to heat and cooling, and the sound system in the church. At our November meeting, we will look at possible changes to our parish by-laws that Rev. Rick Swenson has been working on.

This is a busy time of year! Faith Formation on Sundays and Wednesdays is going strong, and it is a delight to see so many smiling young faces as they learn about God's love for them! Music ministry is also blossoming and it is lovely to see the choir stalls filled with folks sharing their awesome musical talents with the congregation. As we build back from the pandemic years, we are seeing new people and families coming to St. Paul's, and our Sunday attendance is both stabilizing and growing. Many members are stepping up to volunteer for projects and programs that are important to our St. Paul's family and the greater Duluth/Superior community. **All this activity and**



growth is not random. It is a result of thoughtful reflection and discernment by groups and individuals in the St. Paul's community who are considering the question "What is God calling you/us to do?" Both formally and informally, we as a faith community are thinking, hoping, praying and dreaming about how our community can grow in love, how we can serve the larger community, and how we can follow Jesus. It is an exciting time to be a member of St. Paul's!

Nancy Diener, Junior Warden



End-of-Year 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, the counters will be able to determine where your gift should go. Unless otherwise noted, pledge payments will first be applied to 2023 until paid in full and then to 2024.

If you want your gifts included on your 2023 year-end statement, please submit them to the Parish Office by 9:00 am Friday, December 29, 2023, or place them in the offering plate on Sunday, December 24, or Monday, December 25, 2023. Below is a chart that outlines the IRS guidelines we need to follow to determine the tax year credited for your contribution.

If you are making an electronic contribution, please complete transactions by December 27, 2023 to have them included in 2023 Contribution Received. Electronic transactions do not post on the weekends.

TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION	REPORT FOR 2023	REPORT FOR 2024
Checks written in December 2023 and deposited in church offering in January 2024		×
Checks written and deposited in church offering in January 2024, but "backdated" to December 2023		x
Checks written and deposited in church offering in December 2023, but "postdated" to January 2024		x
Checks written in December 2023 and deposited in the mail and postmarked in December 2023, but not received by the church until January 2024	х	
Checks written in December 2023 and deposited in the mail in December 2023, but not post- marked until January 2024 and not received by the church until January 2024		×

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or email.

Thank you, Christine bookkeeper@stpaulsduluth.org

From Your Bookkeeper

I

Dear Parishioners,

September 2023 financials were presented to the Finance Committee and Vestry at their October 2023 meetings. Here is a summary of the September **General Fund** results.

MONTHLY FIGURES: September This Month		Year to date	
Total Pledges collected	\$21,928.90	\$246,249.91	
Total non-pledged collection	\$1,410.50	\$31,891.42	
Investment support	\$7,964.85	\$75,248.20	
Total Income	\$31,304.25	\$353,389.53	
Total Expenses	\$40,544.41	\$417,983.81	
amount over/(short)	(\$9,240.16)	(\$64,594.28)	
General Fund Balance 1/1/2023		\$77,036.78	
fund balance year to date		-\$64,594.28	
General Fund Balance 9/30/2023		\$12,442.50	



- The pledge collection amount for September was \$29399.61 under budget.
- Total income is under budget \$52,975 through the end of September. Please keep in mind that our pledge commitments did not meet our pledge goals.
- Expenses were \$3945 under budget for the month of September and under budget \$25,190 year-to-date, which is good news.
- Our bottom line, income over expenses, for September is -\$9,250.16 and -\$64,594.28 year-to-date. This is not a cause for concern at this point, since we budgeted to utilize the surplus from the prior three years as we rebuild our programs.

Please prayerfully consider additional giving to St. Paul's to support our mission and ministries and offset the deficit.

If you have any questions, please call my office or email me at <u>bookkeeper@stpaulsduluth.org</u>.

Christine Melone, Bookkeeper

Deadline for submissions to the December issue of *The Messenger* is 8:00 am, Thursday, November 16, 2023. Please email items to:

office@stpaulsduluth.org

Stewardship During the Season of Gratitude and Thanksgiving

We have heard from speakers in church during the month of October sharing their personal stories about the impact that St. Paul's has had on their lives. I, too, am grateful for my St. Paul's church family for their support during good times and bad. I'm thankful that St. Paul's has shaped my children's lives, teaching them compassion and awareness for others. I'm grateful for the committees I've participated in which have helped me grow as an individual.

We are reflecting on stewardship this fall, the intentional act of supporting St. Paul's and its vision and mission. We are grateful to have a church built to stand the test of time. Our talented staff leads the spiritual life of our parish, reaches out to the surrounding community, creates music, directs youth formation, manages the finances, maintains the building, and so much more. We also volunteer our time to record church services, serve as ushers and on the altar guild, serve as lec-



tors, acolytes, or chalice bearers, work in the nursery, and serve coffee, to name a few ways we serve our community. Examples of sharing our "talent" include, among many others, singing in choir, playing bells, teaching Sunday School, and serving in ministries of the church. And sharing our "treasures" financially supports all of the work of the parish. Collectively, our time, talent, and treasures make us the St. Paul's community that we are, and stewardship is the act of gratitude in sustaining that.

The act of Stewardship is meant to grow our relationship with God. God loves you and challenges you to be kinder in loving yourselves and giving back to your community. Let this be the season of gratitude and thanksgiving for the community of St. Paul's.

"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Holly Hansen and the 2024 Annual Giving Team

Continued from page 3

at St. Louis County Jail. Bring your special ingredients or utensils and come bake hundreds of cookies with us on **Saturday, December 9, at 9:00 am**. This is



an intergenerational event, so bring your littles with a grownup to supervise, and let's make cookies! Sign up with Deacon Pat.

 Head over to St. Paul's after lunch to help with Loaves and Fishes annual holiday party! You'll be amazed at the transformation of the Parish Hall, and they need volunteers to create this magical place! They need help with set up (Friday evening, December 8), kitchen (including food supplies and side dishes), and clean up. Susan Anderson will let us know more about gifts for children. Mark your calendar for a full day of fun and service!

Family. It includes fun and sadness, understanding and acceptance, confusion and rejection, and lots and lots of conversation. Talking is often easy, listening is often difficult, and patience is often stretched. But often it's in all the stretching and struggling and coming up against rough edges that we are refined, each of us, into greater awareness of ourselves and others. Come spend some time in a small group of the St. Paul's family, and be transformed.

Blessings, Deacon Pat

Pledging Trends at St. Paul's and Beyond

		1
	f a similar size throughout raise annually?	
Tinnesota	Taise annually:	
*ASA means Average Sund	lay Attendance	
	101 0010 170	
St. Paul's in 2023	ASA 2019: 170	St. Paul's 2024 Pledge Goal
126 pledges totaling \$316,0	ASA 2023: 102	\$385,000
		\$303,000
Church A in 2022	ASA 2019: 175	60% of the Parish Making Pledges,
	ASA 2022: 73	For a Total of 144 Pledges
156 Pledges totaling \$624,3		
		Representing a \$70,000 increase in pledged dollars
Church B in 2023	ASA 2019: 168	And 22 New Pledges
	ASA 2022: 100	
111 Pledges totaling \$400,0	000	
		How are we doing so far?
Church C in 2023	ASA 2019: 128	How are we doing so far?
	ASA 2022: 92	That information isn't available at the time of this issue's publication. Please check our weekly emails for
108 Pledges totaling \$599,	548	updates.
Church D in 2022	ASA 2022: 88	What can we learn from this data?
104 pledges totaling \$442,8	354	St. Paul's has done considerably more ministry with
	ACA 2022, 422	fewer annual giving dollars than 6 out of 7 surveyed
Church E in 2022	ASA 2022: 123	churches of similar size. The good news is that we have
132 pledges totaling \$438,4	177	consistently done a lot with comparatively little. The
Church F in 2022	ASA 2022: 87	important news is that we can truly meet the spiritual needs of the people worshiping here by meeting our
124 pledges totaling \$128,7		goals and increasing our income.
Church G in 2022	ASA 2022: 134	
94 pledges totaling \$379,6	16	
Church H in 2022	ASA 2022: 105	
149 pledges totaling \$538,2	264	

LAY MINISTRY SCHEDULE – NOVEMBER 2023

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

	November 5	November 12	November 19	November 26	December 3
ALTAR GUILD	K Leonard	C Conrad	C Miller	R Ballou-Buck	K Leonard
	S Cox	S M Anderson	L Hultkrantz	D Kolquist	S Cox
	J Harvey	S Hall			J Harvey
	S Sommer	A Sadowski			S Sommer
LECTOR 8:00 am	A Mackenzie	M Gustafson	N Diener	J Pastor	M Gustafson
LECTOR 10:00 am	J Pastor	D Rogers	Z Stodola	M Spencer	R Butler
PoP	C Conrad	J Sundberg	H Hansen	S Sommer	C Andrews
CHALICE	J Pastor	P Enenbach	Z Stodola	M Spencer	R Butler
BEARERS	N Constance	R Butler	M Chilson	J Stromquist	SM Anderson
	M Gustafson	K Smith	W Copeland	N Constance	N Diener
ACOLYTES	A Rennan	A Barthel	M Butler	L Fellman	A Dodge
	C Butcher	E Barthel	G French	J Bauer	L Gustafson
	A Keto	I Denney	J Shambour	A Keto	C Gustafson
LIVESTREAM	J Austin	D Barthel	R Lyle	E Barthel	J Austin
COFFEE HOST	C & M Bauer	W Copeland & M Chilson	B & K Silverness	M & M Gustafson	J & V Groth
	M Brown	D Barthel	R Lyle	B Dinan	M Brown
S		D Bartnei D Morin	G Olson	C Dinan	M Brown S Brown
	S Brown		G Olson P Waite	N Schuldt	S Brown
	D Kolquist	K Swanson	M Gustafson		SUD
LOCK UP	T Diener	J Austin	D Pederson	B Stapp	C Fellman

Altar Guild Other Duties for November:

November Linens:

Brass Cleaning for November:

C Conrad, A Sadowski

C Conrad, SM Anderson, P Markert



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

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All Saints' Day

We remember all the blessed saints who have gone before us on All Saints' Day, which will be solemnly celebrated in a special way here at St. Paul's on **Sunday, November 5**. Please add the names of your loved ones who have passed away since last November to the list located at the back of the sanctuary by November 1. All the names will be read aloud on All Saints' Day. Thank you.