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As we await the coming of our Lord

By The Rev. Karen C. Lewis

It is clearly evident that the season of gift giving is upon us! As you read this, Thanksgiving has passed . . . Black Friday has hopefully been successful for those many retailers who rely upon our spending to make it through the next year, and our stress level has increased significantly as the countdown to Christmas grows louder in our ears and draws on our wallets.

We, in the church, begin planning Advent and Christmas weeks and weeks before the season rushes in upon us. In fact, Epiphany and Lent are now sitting upon my desk awaiting my attention. But today, I am here to remind you, and me, that these days are ones in which we are to slow down, sit back, wait with great expectation and prepare joyfully for Christ's return and his reign. Terribly difficult to do at this time of year, isn't it?

Our lectionary readings in Advent encourage us to "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." John cried out in the wilderness to his own people in his own time – John's voice continues to cry out to us today. His voice asks each and every one of us to consider how we are living our lives. Are they in keeping with the kingdom of God? John calls us to re-examine our lives during this time – not in the penitential sense of Lent, but rather as a way of preparing our hearts for the coming once again of Christ our Lord.

The challenge is that we know the ending of this story. We know Christ will come whether we have prepared our hearts or not. We know Jesus will be born in a stable, surrounded by awestruck shepherds and heralded by angels. We know that darkness will turn into light. That sorrow will turn into joy. We know all of this, so why bother?

Because. Because we are asked to do so by John the Baptizer and Jesus the Christ. Because Christmas will enter into your life in a new way, with new meaning and new hope, if you do.

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Senior Warden's Column

By Mark Rudd, Senior Warden

In this darkest of months, we are reminded of the power that a single candle can provide to lighten even the longest of nights. Liturgically, we look forward to a light coming into our world just as people have over the last 2,000 years. December is a month of anticipation culminating in the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ, on December 25. The Good Lord gave us the greatest gift of all, his Son, to provide a light in the world to shine eternally. Best of all, it was free!

The question is: What are you doing about this?

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As we await...

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Because the outrageousness of Jesus' birth, God incarnate, God becoming human, will stir your heart and soul if . . . if you have done the work of preparing yourself to live fully into the kingdom of God initiated in the birth of a squalling baby.

I invite you to join with me in praying each day "An Affirmation of Faith for Advent" written by the Rev. Susan Bock. I believe these words offer a wonderful way to begin our preparation for the coming of our Lord.

An Affirmation of Advent by the Rev. Susan Bock

*We believe in God,
who bends and kneels
towards our world
drenching it with love,
making it new with every breath.*

We believe!

*We believe in Jesus,
God becoming human,
who brought every person
a spark of the divine.*

We believe!

*We believe in the Spirit,
hovering God,
present among us,
abiding, upholding,
awaking all things to her grace.*

We believe!

*We believe we are called
to do justice,*

*love kindness
and walk humbly
with God and each other,
ready for God's reign,
awake and alert,
as we work to bring it near.*

We believe!

*We believe we are called,
as Christmas comes close
to lift up our hearts
in hope and in love,
seeking God's advent
in each moment and person,
each challenge and heartache,
each blessing and joy.*

We believe!

*This we promise to do,
Keep us faithful, Lord Jesus, and come soon.
Come soon! Amen.*



Treasurer's Report

Information as of October 31, 2013

By Jeff Irwin

October 31, 2013 is 83.3% of the year. Pledge income is \$262,178 through October 31, which is 88.6% of the 2013 budget.

Operations show a \$323,245 loss to October 2013. That amount includes \$228,086 for Capital Campaign expenditures and \$12,656 from various other funds. Accordingly, the net year to date operating results is a deficit of \$82,503.

In October we booked \$74,700 of expense for the Tuck Point project. The Vestry approved a \$75,000 loan from the Perpetual Fund to pay for the Tuck Pointing; that will be repaid to the Perpetual Fund when Capital Campaign funds are collected.

There was a \$16,895 gain in value of the invested funds in October. For the first ten months of 2013, the market value of the designated and restricted funds has increased by \$88,440. In addition \$11,158 of designated and restricted revenue has been received as of October 31, 2013. This brings the designated and restricted revenue to \$99,598.

The combined net income of the church as of October 31, 2013 is a deficit of \$223,648. However, as noted above that amount includes \$240,742 of restricted fund expenditures.

Senior Warden's Column

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For you, does it have something to do with giving gifts? Have you gotten your Christmas shopping done yet? You know that starts after Halloween now. Has your spouse, significant other, children, grandchildren, friends and other family let you know what they want? Have you told them what you want? Have you made your travel plans yet (over the river and through the woods)? Is everyone coming to your house? What are the plans for Christmas day dinner? Is it turkey (again)? Perhaps, it will be a Christmas goose this year. What time are you heading out for the day after Christmas sales?

So much to do and so little time to do it. It's little wonder people hate the Christmas season. Somewhere in all the hustle and bustle of December, it's easy to forget the reason for the season. Yes, it is about giving, but let us consider the gift God gave us which we celebrate on December 25, one of the shortest days of the year.

From what we know, Jesus was not born into wealth. His father, Joseph, was a carpenter, and his mother, Mary, a young woman at his birth. When we look to Matthew, we hear the story of the Three Kings following a bright star (a light in the night) over a house, and presenting the baby Jesus precious gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Now that sounds pretty good to me, but the family couldn't enjoy it as they had to flee first to Egypt, and then move back to Israel after evil King Herrod's death. In Luke, we are told that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, "and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn." In either story, God had His Son born in very dark times for the Jewish peoples, and in a family at the least marginally poor.

They probably knew what on a regular basis as the young Jesus grew up into adulthood.

In his ministry, Jesus constantly reminded his disciples and any who would listen that we should always help those less fortunate. Especially the poor, as Acts reminds us: "In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" I believe that in helping others we find that light in us which God gave so many years ago to humankind in the birth of His Son. It has taken me a long time to learn the true meaning of Christmas, despite years attending Christmas Eve services, watching hours of holiday movies like "The Christmas Carol," and giving tons of gifts to family and friends. Maybe it has been because I have been so busy doing Christmas that I did not see what the true message is- helping others less fortunate than me.

The easiest thing for me to do is to give money to charitable causes. Don't get me wrong, I believe that is still a good thing to do. I especially like the fact that our Mission and Outreach Ministry has made a commitment to help the homeless, and we have made a number of financial contributions to community agencies to help their ministries in this regard. Donating clothing and food are other worthwhile efforts to help meet this need. But beyond this, is there something else I could be doing?

The hardest thing for me to do is to take the time to roll up my sleeves and pitch in to help. It's difficult for me (and perhaps you) because it does take time, and December, despite thirty-one

days, is a very busy month. But I'm sure that's what God would want us to do. That's why he gave His light to the world. Could there have been a better gift for humankind?

In September, Nancy and I volunteered to serve the lunch meal to the homeless at the Open Door Ministry, next door at Central Methodist, along with four other St. Paul's parishioners. I heard the heartfelt thanks from people as they received their food, and it felt good! I was doing something which had moved me out of my comfort zone, and yet in each appreciative smile I saw God working through me to help those less fortunate. I'm not trying to toot my own horn because in the grand scheme of things, it wasn't much. But it was a start, and it's made me hungry to do more. I also realize that many of you have already rolled up your sleeves, for years, and are deeply involved; you've been living the Lord's wishes for awhile. Kudos to you.

Make the time to donate your time, as well as your treasures, to helping the poor as Jesus implored us to do. And please take the time to pray for those who may be hungry, sick, or alone at this darkest of months; be mindful of them in your daily prayers. Search for that light inside of you, the "God in us," polish it by the gifts of your time in helping others less fortunate, and let it shine as a beacon so that others can see that the light given to us 2,000 years ago still shines brightly in the world today. In me. In you. In each of us.

I pray that you will feel the presence of God in your midst as you give to others. May the peace and grace of God, and His Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, be with you and your family always.

The greeters for December will be the St. Nicholas Ministry. January greeters will be the Business and Professional Women's Ministry. Leaders, please send the names of the greeters to Kathleen so she can put them into the Sunday bulletin.

Season of Advent

Will the real St. Nicholas Please Stand Up!

On December 8 we will celebrate the feast of St. Nicholas as part of our worship service. So who is this man and what makes him so special?

The true story of Santa Claus begins with Nicholas, who was born during the third century in the village of Patara. At the time the area was Greek and is now on the southern coast of Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus' words to "sell what you own and give the money to the poor," Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to those in need, his love for children, and his concern for sailors and ships.

One story tells of a poor man with three daughters. In those days a young woman's father had to offer prospective husbands something of value—a dowry. The larger the dowry, the better the chance that a young woman would

find a good husband. Without a dowry, a woman was unlikely to marry. This poor man's daughters, without dowries, were therefore destined to be sold into slavery. Mysteriously, on three different occasions, a bag of gold appeared in their home—providing the needed dowries. The bags of gold, tossed through an open window, are said to have landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. This led to the custom of children hanging stockings or putting out shoes, eagerly awaiting gifts from Saint Nicholas. Sometimes the story is told with gold balls instead of bags of gold. That is why three gold balls, sometimes represented as oranges, are one of the symbols for St. Nicholas. And so St. Nicholas is a gift-giver.

To celebrate St. Nicholas and his faithful ministry, you are invited to bring your slippers on Sunday morning, December 8, and leave your shoes in the cloister during our worship service, with hopes that St. Nicholas will appear and fill them with goodies. Don't be shy about this, even your priest, Karen, will be wearing her slippers!

A Blue Christmas December 22 at 5:00 PM

Christmas is a joyful time of year for most folks – a time for love, laughter, and family. But there are those who do not find this such a joyful time. For many it is a time of loneliness – a time when they are unable to celebrate because the ones they love are far away, or perhaps, are no longer with us in this world. To honor the struggle many have in this season, we will invite all in our community to gather at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 22 for a worship service. Yes, we will sing Christmas carols and celebrate the birth of our Lord, but we will also remember our hurts and sorrows, and honor that this time is a challenge and struggle. And, we will pray for hope and comfort remembering that Christ's entrance into our world removed the sting of death. Please join us for the service and a reception. Let us join together, take a brief break from the 'craziness' of preparation for the holidays, and remember those we miss at Christmas and the importance of being present to one another.

Isaiah

Did he Really Foretell the Birth of Jesus?

By The Rev. Karen C. Lewis

On December 2, 2013, we begin our new liturgical year with Advent I. The gospel focus for Year A in our lectionary is that of Matthew; for Advent, our Old Testament readings will come from the great prophet Isaiah. His sayings are most likely familiar to you as Jesus was prone to quote Isaiah quite a bit as was recorded in our gospels. But . . . did Isaiah foretell the coming of the Christ child? Who was Isaiah referring to when he prophesied "For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; . . ."? In Isaiah 11:1-10 is Jesus the "shoot" from the stump of Jesse? Or is there something else going on here?

For three Wednesdays beginning December 4 we will study the Isaiah readings assigned for our season of Advent. How did the Jews understand the words of Isaiah? Are we misinterpreting what was meant by these prophecies? Join with me in discovering how Isaiah's words proclaimed good news for the Jews and continues to proclaim good news for Christians in a very different way. As always, we will start around 5:30 p.m. with Theology on Tap and class at 6:30 p.m. Dinner will be available from The Catered Affaire these three evenings. Please sign up to eat so we can have a count of all who wish to enjoy their cuisine.



Report on the Diocesan Convention

By Sue LeDuc, Jr. Warden

On October 25 and 26, a number of parishioners from St. Paul's attended the 179th Convention of the Diocese of Michigan in Detroit. Attending were lay delegates, Mark Rudd, myself, and Karen Clarke, as well as Rev. Lewis, Jackie Womble, Claudia Hamlin, and Rev. Dick Hamlin, who served as Secretary of the Convention. The business of convention consisted of:

- passing a budget
- consideration of resolutions
- election of candidates to various committees
- election of lay and clerical representatives to General Convention

Our Presiding Bishop, Katharine Jefferts Schori, was the highlight of the convention. She preached the sermon at the convention Eucharist on Friday evening and gave an address to convention on Saturday. Bishop Katherine emphasized that mission is vital to our survival as a community of Christians. We must be open to new forms of worship from "parking lot" congregations to services in pubs, looking outward to those who need help and yearn to hear the good news. Our guides to mission include our Baptismal Covenant, the Millennium Goals, and the 5 Marks of Mission. We must remember that 61 million children have no schooling, 7 million children die every year before age 5 and that 2 ½ billion live without access to clean water – we cannot make changes alone but only in partnership.

It is the chance to worship and mingle and argue and discuss issues facing the church and to listen to each other with willing hearts that is the essence of convention. You will be hearing more this next year about how this parish can pursue some of the more than 30 resolutions passed at the General Convention in 2012.

It takes a Village

by Amy Wortley

Most of us have heard the saying, "it takes a village to raise a child". But what if your village is composed only of paid supports, such as social workers and care givers? What if you are disabled and one of the core features of your disability is lack of interest in others? What if you are unable to communicate by talking? What if you also have a cognitive impairment? What happens to you when your main source of support ends and the other paid supports have limited resources to fill the gaps?

This is the situation for a young adult I know, who found himself aging out of the foster care system. While the foster parents provided plenty of notice, locating appropriate housing for this 18-year-old proved to be a challenge. Placement could have been made at a group home. Though this home wouldn't be a good "match", it would offer safe housing, food, and assistance with personal care. Was a "match" really that important if his basic needs were being met? Yes, his team

determined, a "match" WAS important. The search for alternative housing began and soon another young adult, in need of a roommate, was identified. This situation seemed ideal, until his team discovered there was no funding to help him establish a household. Independent Living money that had previously been available to youth aging out of foster care was not now available. Community resources were explored. Christian Services provided some donations and other items were donated by individuals familiar with this situation, but more was needed. How would he get all of the other necessities to set up an apartment? What about food?

The stage was set for a rather grim situation, at least temporarily. This is where St. Paul's enters the picture and this young man's village expanded. An inquiry was made to the Outreach Committee to see if any support was available to help. Within a few short days (less than 72 hours!), a generous donation was made from

this committee in the form of a Meijer gift card. The gift card came with the restriction that items be purchased that assist this young man develop a "Self-Actualized Life" – a life where he is able to achieve his potential. What a wonderful restriction! Additionally, the Outreach Committee expressed interest in finding other ways to support this individual. It is the collective hope of St. Paul's that ALL of our children achieve self-actualization. St. Paul's village has expanded and another one of our children is on his path to self-actualization. How wonderful!

James 1:27

"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for the orphans and widows in their distress." (NRVS)

Parish News

How to Spend Our Money?

This year we introduced a new budgeting process. It was created so that all of the good folks of St. Paul's have a voice in how we steward our financial resources in 2014. Our first step was to invite all of our Ministry Leaders and Committees to share their 2014 objectives and request the funds they needed to engage in their ministries. After receiving these requests, Jeff Irwin, our treasurer, built a draft budget for Vestry's view.

The income for the 2014 budget is based upon your pledges (so if you haven't turned in your pledge card please do so as soon as possible). At this point in time, there is a significant difference between our income and our expenses . . . which means, as we all know when we balance our own check book . . . you have to make up the difference by either increasing your revenues or decreasing your expenses, or a combination of both.

This is a conversation for all of us to participate in . . . how to we continue to do the good ministry while using our resources wisely? On Monday, December 2 at 6:30 p.m. we once again invite all of St. Paul's Ministry Leaders to gather for conversation. We will ask such questions as "Do we really need all of the funding we have requested?" "What creative ways are available for us to engage in this ministry at a lesser financial cost?" "How might we share this ministry with others in a way that will reduce our expenses?"

Following that conversation, all of the good folks of St. Paul's are invited to gather on December 8 after the 10:00 a.m. service for a potluck and conversation. (I love a good church potluck!) We will provide the meat for the meal (both food and financial), and you are invited to provide your favorite side dish. We will look at our 2014 budget; your thoughts, ideas, and comments are important as we decide the use of your financial gifts for the ministry of God's work and furtherance of God's kingdom. Please plan on attending – I guarantee it will be full of good food and good conversation.

UTO Ingathering:

The UTO Ingathering was a great success. \$700 was collected and forwarded to the National UTO Office. Thank you for your support of this International Outreach Organization.

~Elisabeth Richardson

Confirmation Class

An Inquiring & Discerning Heart

In early 2014, Karen Lewis+ will be inviting all those interested in confirmation, reception, or reaffirmation to join her for conversation and instruction. Confirmation is a sacramental rite for those baptized at an early age to make a public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism. Reaffirmation is for those who wish to reaffirm their Confirmation commitments; and Reception is for those baptized/confirmed in a different faith tradition who wish to be officially received in the Episcopal Church. This special service will be on Thursday, May 8, 2014 at All Saints', East Lansing, with Bishop Gibbs officiating. All those interested in any of these rites, please contact Karen+.

Advent Altar Arrangements



On the first, second, and fourth Sundays of Advent our altar will be adorned with greens. On the third Sunday, we will celebrate rose Sunday with pink arrangements! The church will be decorated for Christmas after the 10:00 service on December 22 and remain through Epiphany.

There is now a 2014 altar flower chart on the bulletin board by the elevator on the main floor outside the Merrifield room. Please sign up on the chart and complete a flower request form. All dedications for a particular Sunday will be honored.

The 2013 Christmas altar flower dedication forms will be an insert in the bulletin starting the 1st Sunday in Advent, December 1.

Thank you to the following parishioners for your participation in this ministry.

December Altar Flower Dedications

December 8 The altar arrangements are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of their deceased members, by St. Elizabeth's Guild.

December 15 The flowers on the altar are given to the Glory of God and in memory of Mary Jane Flewelling, Janie Flewelling, Mary Jo Flewelling, and John Flewelling, by Mary Ann Austin and family and in loving memory of Virginia Atayan, Andrew Atayan, Christopher and Esther Atayan, and Armena and Harry Terzian, by their family.

Parish News

Choir News

By Dr. Stephen Lange

Choir Singing Schedule

December 1: Chancel Choir and High School Choir
December 8: Boys' and Grace Choir; Chancel Choir and High School Choir
December 15: Chancel Choir and High School Choir
December 22 (Lessons and Carols): ALL CHOIRS—Cherubs, Boys' and Grace, High School, Chancel
December 24 (4:00 pm Service): Cherubs and Boys' and Grace
December 24 (11:00 pm Service): High School and Chancel Choirs

Special Dates to Note: There will be no choir rehearsals on January 1 or 2, but choirs will vest on Sunday, January 5. Normal rehearsal schedule will resume on January 8 and 9.

The Lange Choral Ensemble Christmas Concert

The Lange Choral Ensemble will present its annual Christmas concert on Saturday, December 14, at 7:00 p.m. The program will consist of works by Bach, Vittoria, Clausen, and Todd, and will also include settings of several traditional Christmas carols, including Silent Night, I Saw Three Ships, Lo! How a Rose E'er Blooming, and others. The Ensemble will be accompanied on several numbers by a string quintet and organ. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$8 for seniors and students, and will be available at the door.

Special Advent Music

To help mark the anticipatory nature of Advent—as we await expectantly the arrival of Jesus Christ into the world—there will be several special solos, taken from Part One of Messiah, sung during Communion. On the First Sunday of Advent, Victoria Walker will sing “But who may abide the day of his coming?” On the Second Sunday, Kirk Lindquist will sing “The people that walked in darkness.” And on the Third Sunday, Deborah McMartin-Finkel will sing “O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion.” These solos will reflect on the message of the readings for each of these Sundays.

And then on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, St. Paul's will observe the traditional service of Christmas Lessons and Carols on Sunday, December 22, at the 10:00 am service. This service relates the story of God's salvation in the world as told in the Creation Stories in Genesis, the foretelling of Christ's coming in the prophets, and of the fulfillment of these prophecies in the Gospels. Each lesson will be followed by a choral anthem and a congregational Christmas carol. All the choirs will be singing, including the Cherub Choir, Boys' and Grace Choirs, High School Choir, Chancel Choir, and the Handbell Choir.

4F'S UPCOMING EVENTS

(Faith, Fellowship, Food, & Fun)



12:00 Noon Lunch (\$5.00)
12:30 PM Bible Study (with Steve Lange)
1:00 PM to 2:00 PM Program

Please mark your calendars now for these dates.

*December 9 (2nd Monday) – Our annual Christmas Celebration luncheon will feature a festive musical program from the Someko Singers of Okemos High School. Our own Thomas Laub and Margaret Kariuki are part of this wonderful choir!

(4F's returns to the third Monday of each month)

January 20 - St. Vincent's Catholic Charities “Providing Help, Creating Hope”.

Since 1850, the mission of St. Vincent's Foster Home has been the treatment for troubled children and their families through fully integrated services. We'll meet at St. Vincent's (2800 W. Willow, Lansing), have our box lunch and Bible study in their conference room, see a presentation that includes a video explaining the many facets of their ministry. We'll also be able to tour their impressive facility.



The Blood Drive was a fantastic success. Thanks to everyone who helped in every way possible to make this drive successful. We collected 51 units of blood. Everyone had a great time, and the Red Cross was very pleased. Thanks to everyone who made sandwiches, made phone calls, worked the day of the drive, set-up and tear down, and blood donors. Thanks also to everyone who dropped in to give blood and to those family members who strongly encouraged the participation. This extra effort saved us and made our goal possible. Thank you for all the support and participation.

~Elisabeth Richardson

I would like to thank St. Paul Members for the contributions that were donated for the Lyons Colorado Flood victims. My daughter Kate and family were recipients of your kindness and generosity.

With my utmost gratitude, Mary Ann Austin

St. Paul's Mission and Outreach

By Carol Miller

Christmas Eve Gifts for the Christ Child

Please help continue our St. Paul's tradition by bringing unwrapped baby layette items to both Christmas Eve Services. Items will be given to women in need through the Small Children's Closet at Pilgrim UCC Church. Desired offerings include: disposable diapers, receiving blankets, onesies/undershirts, sleepers, socks/booties, crib sheets, and board books. A new little person thanks you for your gifts!

Sowing and Reaping

Six fellows, all Open Door Ministry guests, enthusiastically unloaded the Outback overflowing with non-perishable, nourishing foods: peanut butter, canned tuna, salmon, vegetables, fruits, pastas, crackers, soup, coffee, tea, rice, Thanksgiving dinner fixings, and much more. This rich harvest for our neighboring Food Pantry resulted from our parish donations to the UM/MSU Friendly Food Drive Competition (yes, the Wolverine won by a smidgeon), First Sunday (November) collection, and regular contributions to the shopping cart located by St. Paul's back entrance. Fifteen minutes later, the helpers thanked St. Paul's heartily for this food. Ricardo, his name proudly displayed on his jacket, reached his hand out to mine and we shook hands--both deeply grateful.

What makes reaching out to others so meaningful? As we enter Advent with open hearts, perhaps these words from John Shelby Spong (The Fourth Gospel, p. 172) point to the answer:

In the first epistle of John God is defined as love. Love is not an entity so much as it is a penetrating experience. "God is love," this epistle states. Might this also mean that "love is God" flowing through human life? Love is seen in the ability to be free of survival-driven existence, free to give one's life away. Love embraces people just as they are. Love is not separate from God. One cannot say: "I love God," and hate one's brother or sister. No one can create love. One can only receive it, and when it has been received it must be immediately shared. Love cannot be stored. It cannot be saved for a rainy day. It cannot be used later like leftovers. Love that is not passed on dies. Love is the power that binds us to

meaning of Jesus.

As Christians, we cannot then "hide our light under a bushel", but rather shine God's love through our caring words and actions. St. Paul's continues to be abundantly generous! This season, at least three dozen people will be warmer because St. Paul's parishioners gave them mittens, gloves, hats, and scarves. Several people with BWL shut-off notices stayed warm as our parish worked with Christian Services to cover the bills in October. Fewer people will sleep with empty bellies tonight because our Crop Walkers, led by Barb Bellinger-Heany and Jackie Womble, and their generous donors raised over \$1,000! Six needy Lansing families enjoyed a full Thanksgiving meal due to our parishioners who donated turkeys, bought food items, and delivered the baskets. Our church outreach dollars now surround five local siblings and their mother with the loving warmth that only bedding can bring. St. Paul's, with Kathy Vogel's coordination, gifted this formerly homeless family with pillows, comforter and sheet sets, bed pads, pillow protectors, and towels for all. Topping off this good news: one St. Paul's member donated lovely towels, several others offered to give used bedding, and another person donated money toward this effort. Furthermore, Libby Richardson led us in the charge to donate over 50 units of rich St. Paul's'

blood for the Red Cross to help save lives. Finally, thanks to Karen Clarke, Mandy Lawton, Carol Miller, Theresa Milne, Barb Richardson, and Bobbi Tisdale for serving lunch at Open Door Ministry on November 14. We joined Win Stebbins who was also there as a regular volunteer! Finally, those attending the Requiem Evensong on October 27 donated \$200 for the Greater Lansing Food Bank. THANK YOU ALL!

Critical Need

Super Typhoon Haiyan made landfall in the central Philippines on November 8, causing widespread damage and leading to devastation for millions. Episcopal Relief & Development's local partner, the Episcopal Church in the Philippines, is assessing needs and determining how best to respond. Please consider making a donation to the Disaster Response Fund, which allows ERD to offer assistance where it is most needed. To send a contribution by mail (designate "Philippines Typhoon Relief") Episcopal Relief & Development, P.O. Box 7058 Merrifield, VA 22116-7058 or email www.episcopalrelief.org. To donate to the Salvation Army's Typhoon Haiyan relief efforts, visit the website, or you can mail a check to our Lansing Red Cross Center, 1800 E. Grand River Ave. Lansing, MI 48912, designating "Philippines Typhoons and Flood" in the memo line.

December Mission and Outreach Calendar

Dec. 1		Noisy Offering/Food Bank Donation
Dec. 3	9:00 AM	St. Vincent's Refugee Group
Dec. 7 & 8	9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Holiday Fruit & Greens Pick-up, All Saints, E. Lansing (noon to 2:00 PM Sunday)
	9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Alternative Christmas Mart at All Saints (noon to 2:00 PM Sunday)
Dec. 10	9:00 AM	St. Vincent's Refugee Group
Dec. 17	9:00 AM	St. Vincent's Refugee Group
Dec. 22	5:00 PM	Blue Christmas Service
Dec. 24		Layette Gifts-Donations Given at both Christmas Eve Services for Small Children's Closet
	9:00 AM	St. Vincent's Refugee Group
Dec. 31	9:00 AM	St. Vincent's REFugee Group

God and to one another. Love is the

News from the Altar Guild



*Advent, why blue?
Liturgically blue reminds us to be quiet in
joyful expectation and anticipation.*

During Advent, we prepare ourselves for the celebration of the birth of Jesus 2000 years ago. Spiritually, Advent is a time for us to "get ready" and to strengthen hope in our hearts. The color for Advent is blue. The purple of earlier years resonates with the penitential nature of the season and draws certain parallels to Lent, but the deep blue of Advent highlights the expectant nature of the season. The deep blue of Advent is meant to inspire in us the hope of faith, and to encourage us to keep watch for the promised light of Christ.

It is impossible to fully appreciate the real meaning of Christmas without going through the real work of Advent. The seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany demand distinctly different spiritual approaches: different music, and different worship services. We invite you to share in the liturgies during the coming seasons of growth and fulfillment.

Stewardship Ministry Team

By Ree and Jim Huber



For 99 years you have given thanks and praise to God for His love and guidance and have followed the path on God's Holy Land right here at St. Paul's.

Thank you for a successful Annual Pledge Campaign. Although this year's Continuing Our Ministry Journey--Following God's Pathways campaign was only three weeks long, 77 orange pledge cards have been turned in for a total of \$238,100. We just loved it when people would come up and whisper in our ear and say they had increased their pledge by 10% after seeing the skit about the waitress. At this time, 75% have increased their pledges from last year and only two have decreased their pledges. Stewardship Guides are available for you to continue to review our revenues and expenses. Please feel free to ask questions regarding the finances of our church. The cartoon characters with sayings about stewardship in our weekly bulletins have given us direction about being good stewards with our money and our time.

We thank Karen for reminding us of the power of \$1.00 and how or on whom we should spend it. We also thank Karen for her instructional classes, her sermons, her preaching, and her devotion and love to each of us at St. Paul's. How very blessed we are she was chosen to be here with us as our Priest- in-Charge!

Dates for Book Sale Set

By Sue Millar

March 23 and 30 and April 6 are on the Church calendar for our annual Used Book Sale, organized to raise funds that will support the outreach mission of Episcopal Relief and Development. In years past you have given generously of your books, CDs and DVDs. Each year we look to increase the amount of the gift we send to ERD, so please begin collecting the books you don't plan to read again. Ask your friends and neighbors, too, for donations. Beginning March 2 you may bring in your collected books. Call me if you have any questions (517-675-5665). In the meantime, you can go online – www/er-d.org to make a contribution right now in support of recovery in the Phillipines or simply to get a clearer idea of where and how ERD works in the hurting world.

St. Aelred's

Dear People of St. Paul's, we need you to be our eyes and ears. Please let the office know if you are aware of someone recovering from an illness or surgery and could use a card or a meal or a visit. We want to be of service to those in need in our parish, but we need to be informed to do our best job.

We continue to need Eucharistic Ministers. Eucharistic Ministers are Parishioners willing to bring communion to those who are unable to make it to church. If you would be willing to provide this important service, please let the church office know (517-482-9454).

As a means of caring for our parish community, we would also like to send cards on the difficult day of the anniversary of the death of a loved one. Please call the office to share the date of a loved one's passing, so we can reach out to you in love on that day.

Chris Krupka

Parish Life

By Jackie Womble

December's Recognition

Calling all Volunteers! We would love to celebrate all the volunteers in our parish during the month of December. Please bring in any recognition; awards, certificates, photos, pamphlets/ brochures describing your program. A display table will be available in the Cloister.

Youth News

By Barb Bellinger-Heany

“It’s like God-caffeine for Youth Ministry”

St. Paul’s Youth are exploring Re:form an upbeat, enthusiastic, totally new approach to youth ministry. “It’s like God-caffeine for youth ministry.” Re:form is a curriculum which allows youth a chance to explore and “wrestle” with historic Christian faith and theology.

Re:form features a 10 minute video that frames the theological question of the session. Each youth receives an Anti-Workbook that is filled with individual and group activities. The group will have a chance to explore and bring their questions to the table for lively group discussion. For more information and to view samples of the Video, Anti-Workbook and Leader Guide go to <http://reform.wearesparkhouse.org/samples/>.

St. Paul’s Youth in grades 6-12 are invited to meet each Sunday from 11:30-12:30 (weekly sessions may vary according to other scheduled youth events). Jackie Womble and Barb Heany will facilitate the sessions, with monthly visits from Rev. Karen C. Lewis.



Re:form Group Activity

Christian Education Schedule for the Holidays

There will be no Youth Christian Education or Youth Group on Sunday, December 22 and 29. We will resume our regular schedule on Sunday, January 5.

There will be nursery care available on those Sundays.

LAEP Youth Christmas Party – December 8th

LAEP Youth Group will gather at St. Paul’s on December 8th for a Christmas Party. A luncheon will be served followed by a White Elephant gift exchange and possible caroling outing. Prepare to have fun! See Jackie Womble or Barb Heany for details.

SAVE THE DATES:

December 8, 2013 – LAEP Youth Christmas Party @ St. Paul’s – A Christmas luncheon followed by white elephant gift exchange and activities celebrating the Christmas Season.

January 17-18, 2014 – LAEP Youth Winter Retreat...hosted by All Saints – Details to come.

February 17, 2014 – “E-Pif-any Now” – LAEP Youth will participate in this Pay it Forward community event. You can read about it at <http://www.lansingcitypulse.com/lansing/article-6967-forward-thinking.html>

March 14-16 -- New Beginnings (6th-8th grade)

April 5-6 – Nightwatch (6th-12th grade) – Held at St Paul’s Cathedral in Detroit.

April 25-27 – Happening (9th-12th grade)

May 18 – LAEP Youth end of year party...Adventure Golf and cookout at Heany House.

2013 Rake and Run

St. Paul’s Youth held their annual Rake and Run on Sunday, November 3. Three ambitious crews consisting of six youth and six adults tackled three leaf-filled yards. Although rain had dampened the leaves from the previous week, spirits were not dampened in the least! A good time was had by all. The youth planted a spring bulb in each parishioner’s yard leaving a message of hope and faith. Many thanks to the Johnsons, the Narezos, the Milnes, and Pat Bellinger for your hard work!



Vestry Highlights

October 2013 Meeting

- Theresa Milne offered special devotions to start the meeting.
- Next Vestry meeting moved to November 19 due to conflicts.
- Vestry will write personal thank you notes to parishioners for their pledges.
- S. LeDuc reported that Board of Water & Light determined we need a drain line from two city traps to resolve the issue of paying for steam when it is shut off in summer. Cost of \$1,800.
- Congratulations for the great Children's Sabbath.
- Communications/Technology changed their name from 'Committee' to 'Ministry Team'.
- Finance Committee met with investment advisors for an update; authorized movement of \$50,000 to cash for current construction bills.
- Mission & Outreach Ministry reported the purchase of a \$300 gift card to assist a young man we are sponsoring out of Foster Care and a \$300 gift card given to Open Door Ministry to purchase washing detergent.
- Parish Life Ministry is hosting the November 1 Game Night.
- Pastoral Care Ministry has new members; Chris Krupka will assume administrative responsibilities.
- Stewardship Ministry announced the annual pledge campaign will start and Commitment Sunday is November 10.
- Liturgy and Music Ministry has created a working statement to guide their work – "Create with God a worship space to bring into being God's kingdom".
- In her clergy report, K. Lewis reported on the movement of the baptismal font into the Cloister. She also reported her participation in the diocesan Interim Ministry Clergy Group. Lewis reminded us of her adult teaching classes and the December 22 Blue Christmas service.
- Open Door Ministry has invited the Vestry to provide ten large bottles of ranch dressing for their Thanksgiving Meal.
- Sr. Warden's Report: Mark Rudd is on a discernment committee for a member of All Saints' in East Lansing. He shared with us the petition received from the "Ad Hoc Committee of Concerned Episcopalians of the Diocese of Michigan", which was followed by a discussion.

Vestry Discussion Items

- Sudanese Well Drilling – St. Paul's being asked to financially assist with the drilling of a well in the Sudan. Cost will be shared with the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Battle Creek. Mission & Outreach Ministry has approved use of \$6,000 of their budget with Vestry's affirmation.
- Vestry Retreat – Vestry will meet on December 7 in preparation for a mutual ministry review in February and also for conversation focusing on evangelism.
- Silver Bells – St. Paul's will again host the 'green room' for the parade.
- Budget Process Update – J. Irwin presented a draft budget for 2014. Vestry asked to study it. In addition, Ministry Leaders will be asked to gather on December 2 to review and discuss the budget. The entire congregation will be invited to potluck and conversation about the budget on December 8.

Action Items

- Vestry approved the fund-raising application for the ERD Book Sale.
- Vestry approved the fund-raising application for the England Choristers.
- Vestry approved the release of \$2,000 from the designated mission outreach fund for the Sudanese well project.
- Vestry Nominating Committee formed with retiring vestry members M. Rudd, K. Lindquist, P. Riley, H. Walilko.

Financial Report

- Audit is proceeding on schedule and will be available in November. Annual parking lot lease payment (4C's) of \$4,399 was paid. Realized a \$17,910 gain in value of invested funds. In September collected \$19,336 of Capital Campaign pledges.
- Vestry was informed the Shawver Estate will be gifting the church with two funds that will be designated as restricted for specific use.

St. Paul's Events Calendar

DECEMBER 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Advent I Commissioning of Altar Guild - 8 & 10 am 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion 9:00 AM Altar Guild Corporate Breakfast 9:45 AM Church School - Merrifield Room 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion 11:30 AM Youth Group Meeting 5:00 PM Lange Choral Ensemble 6:00 PM EFM Meeting - Van Atta Room	2 6:00 PM Stewardship Committee 6:30 PM Ministry Leaders Meeting	3 9:00 AM St. Vincent Refugee Program - Merrifield Room 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service 5:30 PM Prayer Group - Chancel	4 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 11:00 AM Lansing Matinee Musicale 12:00 PM AA Meeting 5:00 PM Family Night Dinner 5:30 PM Cherubs, Boys & Grace Choirs 5:30 PM Dinner & Theology on Tap w/Rev. Lewis 6:30 PM Advent Series w/Rev. Lewis 6:30 PM High School Choir	5 6:30 PM Handbell Choir 7:30 PM Chancel Choir	6 FEAST OF ST. NICHOLAS Parish Office Closed 12:00 PM AA Meeting	7 10:00 AM Vestry Retreat @ Rev. Lewis
8 Advent II Baptism Anniversary Celebration Feast of St. Nicholas Celebration L.A.E.P. Youth Group Christmas Party @ St. Paul's 8:00 AM St. Elizabeth Guild Corporate Communion & Breakfast 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion 9:45 AM Church School 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion 11:30 AM Communications Committee 11:30 AM Congregation Potluck Gathering 11:30 AM Youth Group Meeting 5:00 PM Lange Choral Ensemble 6:00 PM EFM Meeting - Van Atta Room	9 12:00 PM 4 F's Luncheon & Someko Singers 5:30 PM Liturgy & Music Ministry	10 9:00 AM St. Vincent Refugee Program - Merrifield Room 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service 5:30 PM Buildings & Grounds Committee 6:00 PM Business & Professional Women Dinner & Mtg.	11 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 11:00 AM Executive Vestry Committee 12:00 PM AA Meeting 4:30 PM St. Aelred's 5:00 PM Family Night Dinner 5:30 PM Cherubs, Boys & Grace Choirs 5:30 PM Dinner & Theology on Tap w/Rev. Lewis 5:30 PM Finance Committee 5:30 PM Parish Life Committee 6:30 PM Advent Series w/Rev. Lewis 6:30 PM High School Choir	12 10:00 AM Rev. Lewis @ Fresh Start 10:45 AM Open Door - Serving Lunch 6:00 PM Quilty Kats - Hill Room 6:30 PM Handbell Choir 7:30 PM Chancel Choir	13 Parish Office Closed 12:00 PM AA Meeting	14 7:00 PM Lange Ensemble Choral Concert
15 Advent III 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion 9:45 AM Church School 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion 11:30 AM Acolytes Meeting 11:30 AM Youth Christian Education Committee 11:30 AM Youth Group Meeting 6:00 PM EFM Meeting - Van Atta Room 11:59 PM SPN Deadline!!	16 6:00 PM Vestry Dinner - Meeting @ 6:30 pm	17 9:00 AM St. Vincent Refugee Program - Merrifield Room 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service	18 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM AA Meeting 5:00 PM Family Night Dinner 5:30 PM Cherubs, Boys & Grace Choirs 5:30 PM Dinner & Theology on Tap w/Rev. Lewis 6:30 PM Advent Series w/Rev. Lewis 6:30 PM High School Choir	19 7:00 AM Men's Breakfast 6:30 PM Handbell Choir 7:30 PM Chancel Choir	20 Parish Office Closed 12:00 PM AA Meeting 6:00 PM Staff Gathering	21 10:00 AM Christmas Tea Decorating
22 Advent IV 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion 9:45 AM NO Church School 10:00 AM Lessons & Christmas Carols 11:30 AM Altar Guild & Congregation Christmas Decorating 11:30 AM Christmas Tea & Cookies 5:00 PM Blue Christmas Service	23 Office Closed	24 CHRISTMAS EVE Office Closed 4:00 PM Christmas Eve Service 10:30 PM Christmas Eve Music 11:00 PM Christmas Eve Service	25 CHRISTMAS DAY Office Closed 10:00 AM Christmas Service 12:00 PM AA Meeting	26 Office Closed	27 Office Closed 12:00 PM AA Meeting	28
29 Rev. Lewis Vacation 8:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion 9:45 AM NO Church School 10:00 AM Worship & Holy Communion 6:00 PM EFM Meeting - Van Atta Room	30 Office Closed	31 Office Closed 12:00 PM Worship & Healing Service	1 FEAST OF THE HOLY NAME Office Closed 12:00 PM AA Meeting	2 Office Closed	3 Office Closed 12:00 PM AA Meeting	4



We pray for those who are sick and in need: Kathy Bowland, Katie Stoltze, Judy, Barb H, Erin, Dave, Debra Staal, Brad, Tara, Chuck S., Kent Riley, Dorothy Ferley, Adam and Ashley.

We pray for those who have ongoing needs for healing prayers: Mason Hill, Marsha Macholz, Bill, John & Grace Hawkins, Tom Foltz, Jan Bigham, Jake Cook, Terri Irwin, William, Elizabeth & Kathryn Senko, Sebastian Cuesta, Joe Manson, Max Sutton, Ronnie, Orville, Blain Coghill, Gordon & Nancy Milne, Marge Cook, Chad, Will, and MaryLea & Ed Benson.

We pray and remember those in the Military, who are serving in dangerous areas: Andrew Foltz, Jeff Doorlag, Sam Foltz, Zachary Bellinger, Tyson Carter, and Sam Montie.

We pray for peace and comfort: for the family and friends of Betsy Andros, Jeanette "Hazel fox, Barbara Hacker, Gordon Hiatt, Lowell Rudd, and Felipe Zamora, who recently passed away.

We pray for those expecting: Anna & Ben Hoffman; Jennet & Isaac Francisco

We pray for and celebrate the birth of: Mason Scott Nichol to parents Tara and Scott Nichol.

We pray for: The Most Revd. Dr. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop; Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury; Wendell N. Gibbs, Jr., our bishop; Karen C. Lewis, our priest-in-charge; and all other worship ministers and staff at St. Paul's.

