

St. Paul's News

JANUARY 2017



After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."



St. Paul's Church is a community of believers in Jesus Christ committed to helping all people by actively practicing the Gospel in word and deed."

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PASTOR'S LETTER

God is faithful

As we move into the New Year of 2017, we can dream about a “better life” with brave new challenges ahead, or we can dwell on the past and, perhaps, become a little disillusioned by personal defeats. Often it is not easy to keep hopeful and optimistic in the circumstances that surround our lives. Many situations are painful and unpleasant. “Why?” we may say. “Why does God permit us to experience so many difficulties?”

I have heard it said that life should not be an endurance test, but it often is! Our patience is tried and tested and we may say, “For what end?” There are no answers to many of life’s ups and downs. Yet the choice is still ours either to give up and quit or prayerfully develop resistance to troubles and disappointments.

Let me share here an encouraging fact from Scripture: We can be stronger than the temptations and disappointments that surround us. St. Paul says, “**God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted [to give up and quit], he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it**” (1 Cor. 10:13). God’s faithfulness in keeping this very promise is one of the greatest gifts of all gifts. This faithfulness is nothing other than the assurance of divine presence within us, and this assurance caused St. Paul to say, “**I can do all things through him who strengthens me**” (Philip. 4:13).

We are stronger than we can ever imagine because God is in us to strengthen us each and every day. This is the confidence that we have in our God, and this also is the truth that leads us through disappointment to our ultimate victory in Jesus Christ. For this reason, we would do well to dream of a “better life” and eagerly look forward to the challenges of the New Year.

In Christ,

Pastor Leon Schultz





HAPPY NEW YEAR

VOTERS' MEETING WILL BE HELD ON January 22.

OFFICIAL ACTS

Funeral of Horst Jourdan Burial December 8th.

Baptism of Ila Jean Drechsler on December 11th.

New Member Welcome: Alexander Dobson, Viakaadeya Forkpa, Karen Anne Kolling, Miatta Marshall, Nathan Roberts

COUNTING TEAM SCHEDULE

- Jan. 1 Dawn & Spencer Seitz, Joan Galloway, Norma Sonstroem
- Jan. 8 Rick Sinnigen, Eleanor Sinnigen, Kim King, Edwin Boger
- Jan. 15 Elaine Slavin, Bob Johnson, Linda & Tom Foley
- Jan. 22 Donna Buce, Kumba Forkpa, Leela & Seaniah Ballah
- Jan. 29 Pat & David Martin, Dennis & Kolu Clark

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Date	Readers	Comm. Assistants	Altar Guild	Ushers
1	Youth	Bill Oehlkers Corvah Akoiwala	Helen Spink Yorqualla Makor	Youth
8	Patricia Martin		Helen Spink Yorqualla Makor	As Available
15	Kevin Riley	David Ballah As Available	Helen Spink Yorqualla Makor	As Available
22	Margaret Boger		Helen Spink Yorqualla Makor	As Available
29	Corvah Akoiwala	Rick Sinnigen Joe Norris	Helen Spink Yorqualla Makor	As Available



URGENT!

Calling a new pastor is important, and we will be doing this in 2017.

If we are going to attract the person to lead St. Paul's in the year to come, developing a congregational action plan is essential.

In order to begin this process, a congregational forum will be held on Saturday, February 4 at 10 AM to create this plan called *St. Paul's 2017 and Beyond*.

Join other members to share ideas and develop a plan that will not only strengthen our mission statement but will attract a new pastor to St. Paul's.

The forum will include a report from the Call Committee on what needs to be done by the congregation before a call is issued.

We urge all those who are devoted to the future of St. Paul's to attend

For more information, contact Bill Oehlkers, Chair of the Stewardship Committee



JANUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SSATURDAY
1 Worship 10:00 am Communion	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Worship 10:00am	9	10	11 Gbarnga Board Meeting 7:00PM	12	13	14
15 Worship 10:00am Communion	16	17	18	19 Council Meeting 7:00PM	20	21
22 Worship 10:00am Voters' Meeting	23	24	25 Gbarnga Ex. Board Meeting 7:00PM	26	27	28
29 Worship 10:00am Communion Presentation Raynham, MA	30	31				

Challenge 2017

Will you take the challenge?

A friend of St. Paul's who wishes to remain anonymous is challenging members to increase their giving to the congregation in 2017.

All contributions in 2017 (through your church envelope) will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$30,000. This could mean a potential increase at St. Paul's of \$60,000.

For new members, all contributions beyond \$250 (through the church envelope) will be matched dollar for dollar as well.

To help members of St. Paul keep track of their giving, quarterly statements will be issued.

Example:

A member gave \$1000 to St. Paul in 2016. If this member gives \$1250 in 2017, the \$250 increase will be matched by the donor, realizing \$500 to St. Paul's for its ministry.

VOTERS' MEETING

There will be a Voters' Meeting on Sunday, Jan. 22, 2017, in the sanctuary immediately following the service. Items on the agenda are:

1. Application of Viakaadeya Forkpa for voting membership;
2. Election of Viakaadeya Forkpa to the Board of Finance (for a term ending 6/30/18);
3. Election of Bill Oehlkers, Danlette Norris, Dennis Kollie, Mayamu Dreschler, and David Ballah, Jr., to the Board of Stewardship (for terms ending 6/30/18);
4. Approval of proposed 2017 church budget;
5. Decision regarding calling a seminarian or a pastor from the field (the Call Committee's recommendation on this question will be announced after its Jan. 7, 2017, meeting); and
6. Request from Deacons for authorization to enter into negotiations with Pastor Schultz for the purpose of engaging him as the vacancy pastor. (If the authorization is granted, the terms of employment, including Pastor's compensation, will be submitted to the voters for approval at a Voters' meeting which will be held in February.)

MINUTES OF CHURCH COUNCIL

November 17, 2016

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Church Council was called to order at 7:06 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 17, 2016, by President Gerry Quarm. Present were: President Quarm, Vice-President David Ballah, Treasurer Dan Robinson, Secretary David Martin, Financial Secretary Donna Buco, Chairperson of the Board of Deacons Joe Norris, and Pastor Schultz. The meeting opened with a prayer offered by Pastor. Chairperson of the Board of Social Ministry Danlette Norris joined the meeting in progress.

Approval of Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2016, Church Council meeting as submitted.

Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Dan Robinson presented a Treasurer's Report for the period Jan. 1 through October 31, 2016. During this period total income was \$178,511.95, and total disbursements were \$188,732.39, resulting in a deficit of \$10,220.44. Dan noted that there has been a marked increase in offerings and that this was primarily attributable to the 150th Anniversary Celebratory Service held on October 23rd. This increase is reflected in the fact that as of September 30th offerings were approximately \$5,200.00 below the amount budgeted and that as of October 31st they are approximately \$11,300.00 ahead of the amount budgeted. As a result, the year to date deficit has been cut in half, declining from \$19,453.72 at the end of September to \$10,220.44 at the end of October. The balance of Memorial Funds as of October 31, 2016, is \$201,865.07.

Pastor's Report. Pastor had no official acts to report. In consultation with the Deacons, it has been decided that new members will be received into membership during the service on November 27th. Pastor is planning to serve his annual Christmas Dinner to the congregation in December. The old Christmas tree has been removed from the back of the choir alcove and a new Christmas tree has been purchased. As the new tree is not as tall as the old one, it has been suggested that the tree be placed on a table.

Deacons. Echoing Pastor, Joe Norris reported that new members would be received into membership on Nov. 27th. The Deacons, in collaboration with the Board of Social Ministry, will be assisting at the soup kitchen at Grace Episcopal Church on George Street on Saturday, Nov. 19th from 2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. **Trustees.** David Martin reported for the Trustees. A Work Day is being held this Saturday, Nov. 19th, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Tasks to be accomplished include raking and bagging leaves, cleaning gutters, and picking up litter. As a token of our appreciation to Independence Home Care (IHC), which is graciously allowing us to use their parking lot, members will rake the leaves along IHC's fence on Carter Street.

Finance. Dan Robinson reported for the Board of Finance. He has completed a draft of the 2017 church budget. He will be meeting with the rest of the Finance Board so they can review the draft budget. The goal is to have the budget ready for review by the Church Council at its December 15th meeting.

Social Ministry. Danlette Norris reported that the collation following the October 23rd Celebratory Service had been very successful. The Board of Social Ministry is planning to distribute post-Thanksgiving baskets to needy persons. Last year 20 baskets were distributed, and the Board hopes to do a similar number this year. In response to a question concerning who receives the baskets, it was explained that some go to people who telephone the church office seeking assistance. The names of the callers are taken and provided to the Board of Social Ministry. Some baskets are also given to members of the congregation. Danlette advised that board members have been visiting the sick and the shut-ins. **Old Business. Snow plowing.** Dan has tried to make contact with the person whose name was provided by Children's Friend. He has left voice mail messages but has not received a call back. He will try again, and if he is still unsuccessful, he will inform Children's Friend.

Parking Lot Problems. David Martin reported that he has not yet sent the letter to Children's Friend asking them to share in the cost of installing gates to the parking lot. He explained that he felt the timing was wrong, coming so soon after our previous letter regarding Children's Friend's use of the the parish hall and the space beneath the parish hall. It was agreed that the letter should be delayed until mid-December.

New Business. Cancellation Announcement. In the event of inclement weather requiring the cancellation of a worship service, the cancellation announcement will be broadcast on Channel 12. A notice to this effect will be inserted into the Worship Folder.

Revised Constitution and By-Laws. A motion was made, seconded, and passed that the revised church constitution and by-laws should be submitted to the New England District for their review.

Thank You Letters. A motion was made, seconded, and passed directing that thank-you letters from the Church Council be sent to the Associated German Societies of New England and the Rhode Island German American Preservation and Heritage Commission for their contributions to St. Paul's 150th Anniversary Celebration.

A Mighty Fortress. David Martin presented a request from Pat Martin that the practice of standing for the singing of "A Mighty Fortress" be revived. David noted that next year will be the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and that restoration of this practice would be fitting.

Mission Office. President Quarm reported that he had established a "Mission Office" in one of the unused rooms in the basement. He explained that he envisioned the room as a place from which all mission activities of St. Paul's could be conducted. It is hoped that a computer, printer, and internet connection will be available in this office. President Quarm asked for feedback from the Council regarding the office. Danlette said that having another place to meet was a good thing as the church office was often crowded on Sundays after the service. After some discussion, it was decided that the matter would be put over to the next Council meeting for further consideration.

There being no other business, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and passed. The meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David L. Martin, Secretary