

FROM THE DEAN

Cassocks, the Many Hands of Jesus, and Evangelism

I recently had a conversation with someone about why I always dress in clerical shirt, collar, and cassock. It was an interesting and enlightening chat. I was reminded that we each have our own response to each other and what life presents to us, a response that might be quite different from what was intended.

For some, seeing a priest in a cassock (which was the norm prior to Vatican II) elicits painful reminders of their childhood in parochial school, and for others contempt, and still for others bemusement. Among Anglicans, wearing a cassock after the 1960's usually signaled sectarian identity. But what does it mean to me, and to many of my colleagues of my age group and those younger, and what do survey after survey suggest it means to younger folks who were not raised with any religious training?

Rather than suggesting any form of sectarian bias or leanings, wearing a cassock always reminds me that I am a living symbol of the Church and of Jesus, the cassock saying "I'm here for you if you need prayer or help." I do quite often get strangers on the street, in restaurants, in

grocery stores, and coffee shops who approach me for conversation, prayer, assistance, or simple curiosity. In other words,

wearing a cassock serves a deeply evangelical purpose in the life of the Church and society today, a society unfamiliar with the sacred.

It reminds us that there is rhythm to life that is possible, a way of living in the world following a pattern that resonates

through the millennia that there is more to life than being a consumer, a fan, and a name on a ballot.

There is a life based on the invitation of Jesus to participate in the life of the kingdom of God. It may look strange, or eccentric, to be sure, but given the many of conversations that would never have happened if I was not a walking billboard for the Church, I am happy to bear the raised eyebrows or the contempt of a few. If only one lost soul finds grace, then it will have been worth it.

Let's back up a little bit. Yep: there it is—I used the "E" word...*Evangelical*, *Evangelism*. We will come back to that shortly.

On Ascension Sunday, the Sunday before Pentecost, those who were present for worship were gifted with an extraordinary experience. When I spoke to the congregation about having early onset Parkinson's and needing the prayers of every person present, I asked everyone to come lay their hands on me, to pray for me, and that I be anointed with holy oil. At both masses, the response was more beautiful and precious to me than I can describe, with the entire congregation coming forward to lay hands upon me, to lay the many hands of Jesus upon me for healing.

You see, we are literally the Body of Christ: his hands, his feet, and his heart. The gentleness of the prayers and of the hands laid upon me, row upon row of hands laid on the shoulders of those in front of them, creating a single, beautiful, and holy body, open to the presence of the Holy Spirit flowing through us for healing and blessing, was perhaps the most concrete feeling of being loved by God that I have had since I was a child.

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"As I was receiving such love, I heard the voice of the Lord whisper to me **that for our church to thrive and grow, it will look more and more like Ascension Sunday, a day when all the people of God offered themselves to be the hands of Jesus to each other and to the world.**"



Cathedral Adds Unexpected Pages to its Spiritual Story

By Nancy Alice Morton

Sunday, May 28, 2017, will be remembered for remarkable signs and wonders at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Des Moines. The people of God (aka the entire congregation) physically moved from praying in the pews to participating in the narrative of the new things God is showing us.

Act 1, page 1: 8 O'clock

Fr. Troy Beecham, Dean of the Cathedral, told us of a recent diagnosis of early onset Parkinson's disease. In lieu of preaching, he sat in a chair near the front pews and invited the congregation to come, lay hands on him, and pray for healing. Everyone came forward. Those who could, touched him. Everybody else put a hand on the person ahead of them forming prayer links reaching out in all directions. Some prayed aloud. Most prayed silently. Fr. Troy was anointed with holy oil for healing in body, mind and spirit. After a few moments of silence, the Eucharist continued.

Act 1, page 2

The disruption started midway through distribution of communion. A neatly-dressed young woman with a backpack entered the church and proceeded up the center aisle. With each step she cursed our building calling the people in it evil, devil worshipers. She prophesied our destruction and damnation.

Declaring God's love and ours, Fr. Troy stepped out calmly. His repeated words, "We love you," picked

up by the congregation waiting at the altar rail, echoed behind him. The usher who had greeted her arrival stood quietly beside the woman and walked with her when she turned and left the sanctuary.

Fr. Troy rebuked the curse on the building and its people in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He called a blessing upon all including our strange visitor. Communion resumed.

Act 2: 10 O'clock

The Dean repeated his request for healing prayer. Again the congregation, joined by the choir, gathered around him, praying silently or aloud in English or their native language. Communion proceeded without interruption.

(Personal reflection: At the coffee hour between services the eight o'clockers were primed to tell and share their experiences to friends arriving for the next service. My information about the second service came later in the week when I started asking, "What do you make of what happened Sunday?" Most mentioned awe and astonishment. Many felt the presence of the Holy Spirit. Some expressed anxiety about a stranger with a backpack.)

Act 3: The Next Page – Telling Our Stories

(Personal Reflection: Getting ready to write this article, I asked several members about the events on May 28. Most responded quickly from the heart. Sometimes, however, I heard, "I wasn't there, tell me what happened!" It seems to me the Next Pages will highlight conversations, repeating stories about this astonishing experience that nourish us and bind us as a community of faith.)

An Invitation to Conversation

Sunday, July 9, at noon at St. Paul's Cathedral

Informal table talk in small groups over lunch with those present on May 28 and those who were not.

Fr. Troy Beecham will update his healing in progress

Format: Just enough structure so story tellers and listeners can participate comfortably and safely. No formal presentations. No scribe/reporter needed.

From the Dean, *continued*

As I was receiving such love, I heard the voice of the Lord whisper to me **that for our church to thrive and grow, it will look more and more like Ascension Sunday, a day when all the people of God offered themselves to be the hands of Jesus to each other and to the world.**

Since then, I continue to hear folks talking about the experience, relating their feelings of awe, wonder, and love. In case you might have missed it, it is in the telling of our precious, treasured experiences – those moments of grace and powerful, gentle love – that we discover the true meaning of being evangelical and of practicing evangelism. When we talk with each other, our friends, or even strangers, and tell our stories of wonder and awe, we are inviting them to come and see, and to share in that experience of the love of God. We have no need to change people, or change their minds (that's proselytization, not evangelism). We only need to speak from our experiences of grace, hope, and

love, and invite others to share in it with us. If I had told any of you that in sharing your story of Ascension Sunday, you had become evangelists, would you have imagined such a thing? As we heard recently in the story of Abraham and Sarah having a baby in their old age, the visitor exclaimed "Is anything too wonderful for the Lord?!"

The Spirit of the Lord has been moving with greater freedom among us, dear friends, and I can feel the hand of the Lord beginning to turn the page for the start of a new chapter in the story of the life of the good people of St. Paul and our shared ministry in this community.

My prayer is that we will continue to grow in our openness to the Holy Spirit, to be empowered as the people of God, the Body of Christ, and to find deep satisfaction and joy in learning how to tell our treasured, shared experiences of grace. This is a new day for the people of St. Paul, an exciting new chapter, and wondrous invitation!

Thanks be to God!

Please Join Us When the Central College Annual Summer Reunion Choir comes to St. Paul's on Sunday 6 August at 10:00 Service



Every year Central College choir members past and present gather on a summer Sunday for singing and reconnecting. We are pleased to include the 10:00 Mass at the Cathedral as part of our reunion. Please come and enjoy the grandeur and beauty from this fifty-voice reunion choir. It is a perfect Sunday to invite friends and family, especially folks needing a spiritual home. The Cathedral musical and liturgical traditions are a treasure worth sharing. Finally, thank you for sharing the Cathedral's warmth and hospitality to our guests on this festive day.

A Note of Appreciation from Mark Babcock, Cathedral Organist



August will mark my one-year anniversary as Cathedral Organist. It is hard to believe that a year has passed. As I reflect on the year, I remember millions of notes that have graced the Cathedral walls and soared to the rafters. I recall the hymns, anthems, voluntaries, and service music that have led us to God, to each other, and to the world. I can see the warm smiles and hear the kind words after services. The Cathedral is known for its rich, noble music traditions not merely as historical preservation, but because sacred beauty helps us experience the transcendence, awe, and mystery of God often missing in popular culture. Music and liturgy at the Cathedral help us to stop and listen. It has been my humble privilege and honor to help this Cathedral pray, sing, and listen for God's voice this past year.

I hope you appreciate the beauty of our building, this world-class pipe organ, the unique

Anglican traditions, and St. Paul's mission as much as I do. Everyone who knows me has been forced to hear about the Cathedral during this past year. I have enjoyed sharing the Cathedral with my students, alumni, family, and friends. I absolutely love it here and believe we have a unique witness to God's love, joy, and peace. I hope you will join me in welcoming people as they look for a spiritual home.

Please accept my sincere gratitude for your presence, your voices, and your kindness. While I enjoy practice and preparation on my own, my greatest joy is making music with you and for you as we offer our divine worship. In addition, I am grateful to the entire Staff, Cathedral Choir, Cathedral Arts, and Chapter for their welcome and support. "When in our music God is glorified, and adoration leaves no room for pride, it is as though the whole creation cried, Alleluia." (Fred Pratt Green) Thanks be to God.

In gratitude, Mark Babcock

July Second Sunday Brunch

Our July Second Sunday Brunch will be held in the Undercroft on Sunday, July 9th, and we hope you will join us.

A light lunch will be served. Please RSVP to the Cathedral Office by Noon on Wednesday, July 5th, by calling 515-288-7297. *Thank you!*

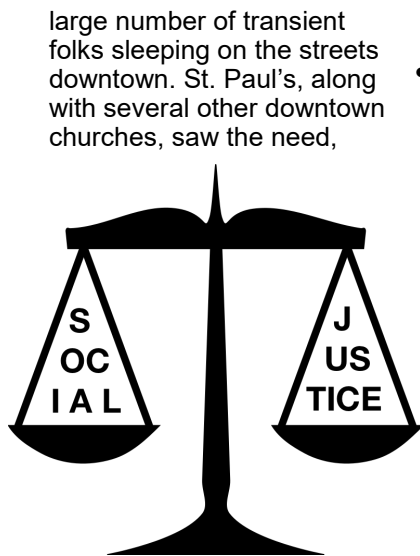


The Coffee Hour Fund is getting low, and we would really appreciate contributions to keep it going. Thanks!

St. Paul's Long Tradition of Social Justice: Did You Know?

(Much of this information comes from Deacon John Doherty's Sunday June 18th Sermon)

- In 1915 St. Paul's founded St. Monica's School, a home for young women who were down on their luck or fleeing abusive households. The school was located at 1011 Park Avenue off SW 9th Street.
- During the 1950's and 1960's a Coffee Shop in the undercroft was established as a safe place for teens to gather and hang out. A suicide hotline was also set up, primarily in response to tragically high rates of teen suicide. Though no longer at St. Paul's this hot-line is still active.
- Though the Parish never took a public stance on the Vietnam war, peace protests and other activities were promoted, and many members were very active in opposing the war.
- During the mid to late 20th Century, Des Moines had no homeless shelter and quite a



came together, and started housing people inside some of their buildings. About 25 people would be there every night, and the churches would take turns on hosting. Eventually they were able to raise money to build the "Churches United" shelter, which has since moved locations and changed its name to the Central Iowa

Shelter and Services.

- In the early nineties, a contentious time for the entire Episcopal Church as we collectively decided whether to be affirming of gay congregants and leaders, St. Paul's decided to be an openly inclusive church.
- Most recently, St. Paul's has engaged mainly in mercy ministries. Through Connections Café we invite around 150 people inside our parish to be served lunch every day. We also serve meals at the homeless shelter once a month and are involved in providing food for school children throughout the entire calendar year and especially during the summer when school is not in session.

The Sanctuary Discernment Team Wants You!

Over the past few months, St. Paul's has begun discussing our role in the New Sanctuary Movement. In June, we began to hold regular meetings for us to prayerfully and thoughtfully consider how to move forward in this endeavor together. We hope that any and all who are interested - regardless of how many meetings you have been able to attend in the past - come as often as they are able. This is not an easy or simple conversation, and we truly desire that everyone has a chance to share their perspective.

Here is a brief refresher on the discussion: sanctuary is an act of faith, compassion, and mercy in response to an emergency situation. In the context of immigration, which is the current impetus for this movement, sanctuary happens when houses of worship open their doors to provide a place of safety and refuge to community members and neighbors who are in immediate danger of deportation.

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Member Birthdays & Anniversaries

Happy birthday to the following July people:

Dennis Bates, July 4
Twyla Anderson, July 7
Barbara Briggie Smith, July 8
Martha Hippee, July 11
Bruce Beeston, July 14
Scott Green, July 15
Tom Thompson, July 17
Vicki Ingham, July 18
Laurie Theis, July 23
Bret Dublinske, July 29
Margaret Lozier, July 30

July Happy Anniversary:

Al and Nancy Geiger, July 5
Dawn and Hulbert Bannister, July 8

Happy birthday to the following August people:

Sally Bates, Aug. 3
Jill Ferguson, Aug. 3
John Doherty, Aug. 5
Cynthia Ingham, Aug. 5
Ted Lozier, Aug. 7
Charlie Wheeler, Aug. 7
Bill Graham, Aug. 9
Robin Kline, Aug. 10
Barbara Jeneary, Aug. 11

Samuel Wheeler, Aug. 12
Kathryn Wheeler, Aug. 18
David Wheeler, Aug. 21
Tom Tarbox, Aug. 22
Carol Clay Hall, Aug. 24
Russell Benda, Aug. 27
H. Buck Wheeler, Aug. 31
Cindy Morton, Aug. 31

August Happy Anniversary:

Robert & Laura Wootten, Aug. 9
Alan & Donna Scarfe, Aug. 23
Melanie & Richard Scupham, Aug. 23

**Below are the dates for the upcoming Connection Café
and Shelter Meals for July and August.**



Des Moines' Ecumenical Eatery



Connection Café for July:

Make sandwiches after the 10:00 service on Sunday, July 9; serve on Monday, July 10.

Connection Café for August:

Make sandwiches after the 10:00 service on Sunday, August 13; serve on Monday, August 14.

Shelter Meal for July:

Monday, July 24

Shelter Meal for August:

Thursday, August 24

Sanctuary *continued*

There are three basic options for participating in sanctuary. A church can choose to welcome someone to live within the building, give support to other churches who are, or voice public support of the movement without providing resources to it. We hope that the discernment team will be able to 1) decide if St. Paul's is called to participate in this movement and 2) determine specifically what that would mean in order to 3) draft a resolution to present to the relevant decision making bodies.

We began our group discussions by talking about our call as a church, specifically as it relates to Justice and Mercy, and what it means to live that call out. This discussion was influenced in part by Bonhoeffer's 1931 sermon "God's Loving Care and Human Suffering," which challenges the reader to grapple with Psalm 63:3 "Your steadfast love is better than life." Here is a short (yet challenging) passage that will give you a taste: "...If we want to understand God's goodness in God's gifts, then we must understand them as a responsibility we bear for our brothers and sisters...possessions are not God's blessing and goodness, but the opportunities of service which God entrusts to us."

We also talked about the St. Paul's specific history with justice and mercy, which you will find outlined elsewhere in this newsletter. As we move forward in discussion, we hope to move this conversation into more direct relationship to the issues surrounding migration in the United States and what the need for Sanctuary is, yet we hope to constantly bring ourselves back to the love of God and our faith and obedience to Christ as the foundation of all the collective and individual work that we do.

Please join us and as we learn to walk in love together! Our Summer meetings are scheduled for July 23rd and August 6th and 27th in the undercroft during coffee hour.



Kitchen Renovation Update

Work on the long-desired renovation of the downstairs kitchen continues. The cabinets which needed replacement have been removed, as have center island, the sinks and the stove.

In the picture on the right you can see that part of the floor has been removed in order to accommodate the grease interceptor.

Outside, a new draining system is being installed around the apse, which will alleviate the persistent water problem.

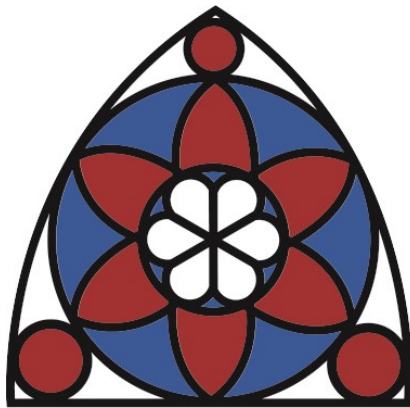
Once the construction is complete, the Kitchen sub-committee will be asking for volunteers to help with arranging the new space. Everything will need to be inspected, cleaned, and put away.



It is anticipated that this may take several weekends, so we hope to entice many helpers during that time.

Questions? Please feel free to ask John Kerss, Anne Reasons, or Phyllis Melton.

The Spring United Thank Offering (UTO) Ingathering was on Sunday, June 4, and – thanks to you – we have gathered \$713.12 to date.



ST. PAUL'S

EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

**The September issue of The Journey
will have a new format and a new look!**

Your articles, news, and photos are always welcome!

The deadline for the September issue will be Tuesday, August 22.

Please mail to administrator@cathedralchurchofstpaul.org
Or bring it to the Cathedral Office.



Electronic Giving

A convenient, consistent way to help our church grow

St. Paul's now offers text giving!

We have added text giving to our online giving account, and you can automatically give by texting the amount you wish to donate to this number:

515-207-8133.

DONOR GUIDE

- 1.Text the amount you would like to give to your church's designated number.
- 2.If you are a first time, text-giving donor you will be prompted to visit a secure URL.
- 3.Once you click the registration link, you will enter your credit or debit card information.
- 4.At this point your donation will process.
- 5.You will see a confirmation text showing your donation and registration were successful.



Tips for future text-giving donations

- If you only text a monetary value, the funds are attributed to your church's default fund. (Ex: \$50 = will go to default fund)
 - If you text the amount + fund name- the funds will be attributed to that fund name. (Ex: \$10 Building)
 - If the fund name you texted does not match- you will receive a message with a list of fund names for you to choose from.
 - If you text "Funds" you will receive a reply text including a list of the fund names they can choose to donate to.
 - If you text "Help" you will receive a reply text that states: "To give enter the amount you want to give, such as 100. You can also give to a specific fund by typing it after your amount, such as 100 building fund"
- If you text "Reset" you will receive a reply text that states: "Saved card information successfully removed. Please register your card information again when making your next gift by texting an amount to this number."

Safe and Secure Online Giving Available!

We now offer safe and secure online giving on our website by using the QR ("Quick Response") Code printed on the right. Credit and debit cards are accepted. You can set up an account or quick give. An account allows you to set up a donation schedule and/or track your donations. Quick giving allows you to bypass this step. You may choose to give to our general budget, to the Cathedral Preservation Fund, or Cathedral Arts.



Please be sure to visit our website:

<http://cathedralchurchofstpaul.org/>

We also offer on-line giving, and here's the link:

<https://www.e360giving.com/g3/>