
St. Paul's Red Door Chronicle

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January 2009

EnHancements

A new year has dawned at St. Paul's, and like so many of you, I wonder what 2009 will bring. Will 2009 bring us a national economy moving toward greater stability? Will 2009 bring us more jobs and stability locally? Will 2009 bring us the priest of our dreams and parish stability? We most certainly hope we will answer all the above questions with a resounding "yes", but we have grown enough in life to know that uncertainty is all that is ever truly certain.

In an earlier article to you I mentioned we needed to consider possible changes in how our new priest may choose to conduct business. There certainly is *uncertainty* when it comes to *how* we will be asked to change. Parish life in 2009 will not mirror our lives from the last ten years with Fr. Mid, or even last year. As soon as January 25th, we will experience at the very least our first change. The face of the Vestry will change as three current members' transition off while three new come aboard. We don't know how else the mirror will change in its reflection, but our image will certainly have a different cast. Life from the last ten years didn't mirror the eight or so years that preceded them, or the many that preceded those. Simply keep in mind, we have changed much already. We all tend to forget this as we reminisce on what was.

When I think of change, I think about Laura's and my own story. It is a story that isn't too different from many of yours. Laura and I came to St. Paul's for change. In our particular case, we were both very strong in our own separate religions. We already had "church" identities. The problem we found with this situation was we were passing on to our children no church identity at all. It was a distinct division of faiths, and they weren't grounded in either. If our family "unit" was to be fulfilled in faith, we had to be willing to let go of our own sacred cows and allow change for the good of the whole family.

When I look at our St. Paul's membership, I see many of you who were of other faiths before coming to St. Paul's. We have seen many of our clergy, and even our own bishop, start their journey from a faith different than that of the Episcopal Church too. Consider for a moment, if you/they had not been willing to change, to change in attitude and latitude – what would our parish and diocese look like? In our own parish, if only "cradles" were present, wouldn't it be a little lonely looking and sad? If you are a cradle Episcopalian and initially your spouse wasn't, aren't you thankful they were willing to change? So, we can easily see that change has already been a strong factor that has been present in our parish. Change I like to believe has been for the betterment of us all.

Now, it is true I have been talking of the change that could come knocking on our door in terms of vague generalities. As you read these words some of you may be saying, "Hance, get down to it. What is really on your mind with this change thing? What do you think is something we may have to consider? Do you have some sort of an example?"

I can honestly say I know of no specific issues we will be facing. However for the sake of discussion, **and as an example to stir your thinking**, I will share with you the feelings and thoughts given me by every single one of our supply clergy concerning what they feel will change for us. They feel that regardless of who our new priest will be, due to the change of philosophy seen in the church, an additional stand alone altar for Eucharist very well could be in our future. Now, these folks didn't get together and talk it over before they mentioned it. It was presented independently, and I might add, with strong feeling.

Knowing how some still talk of *the new prayer book*, although it came about 40 plus years ago, I can only imagine how much fun an introduction of this sort of change would be.

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So, each time it came up as we walked about surveying the new construction in the sanctuary, I would take the opportunity to inquire why our visiting clergy felt the way they felt. I guess as I look back on our talks, even then I knew full well it would make for a fun *EnHancements* article at the very least.

So as we talk of “could be” change, here is their case, and I assume the case the priest would make, in a much condensed nutshell:

- Philosophically, it puts us in the wrong place to begin with. The placement of the priest between the lay members and the Altar represents a Catholic belief that the priest must be the mediator between the people and God. This stemmed from the belief we could not talk to God ourselves. An early practice and tradition that is even being abandoned by most Catholic churches today.
- It is considered by many in the clergy world as a tradition that goes *against all we have become* as Episcopalians. Rather than welcoming the laity with the good news of the Eucharist with open arms facing forward, it harbors the practice of separation and concealment of the blessed Sacraments. Sacraments that illustrate how very much God loves us.
- Closer to home, St. Paul’s is one of just a very few parishes left in the Diocese that still holds to this practice. Just about every parish in the state has let go of this early tradition and either moved the existing Altar where practical, or constructed a second Altar where the originals could not be moved.

In looking to attract new members, research into church growth shows this is not a practice that entices young families who are looking for a church home to choose you. Statistically, most people who are looking for a church will decide in the first 20-30 minutes if they will ever go back. The practice of the priest turning their back to the congregation is viewed as a “put off” and gives the impression of congregational staleness.

In reading this **example**, some of you may respond to it by saying, “Over my dead body!” Some may say, “About damn time!” Some may wonder, “What’s the big deal? What is all the hub-bub about?” All three of these statements are common responses when **any change could occur**.

The first two especially to changing a long standing practice. The key to change is to understand what it means to be flexible and take into account what is good for everyone. The reason for resisting change simply because “it has always been done this way”, is no real reason at all.

As 2009 dawns anew, I rather ask you to prayerfully consider whatever change may come our way. Basically it falls to us to help our new priest achieve success in this calling. After all, it is a calling to help us continue to grow and thrive. Often time success or failure is determined by how we react. Will you choose to be a help or a hindrance to the process by closing your mind to the possible benefit?

The bottom line: No matter what the changes may be or what sacred cows they may involve, if they allow us to better perpetuate the light of Christ in each other and our neighbors, we have done well in considering them.

God bless,
Paul Hance

REMOVING CHURCH DECORATIONS

SUNDAY, January 4, 2009
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING
10:30 AM SERVICE

It is never as much fun to take down decorations as it is to put them up, but it is faster! And, your help will make it even faster.

USHER SCHEDULE January 2009

4–Alan Bufford & Dwight Ford
11–Chris Okolo & Allan McSpadden
18–Gary Perkey & Kirk Warden
25–Alan & Amanda Seagrave

PARISH MEETING

St. Paul's Annual Parish Meeting will be on Sunday, January 25th. Immediately following the 10:30 am Celebration of Holy Eucharist, we will move to Anglican Hall to hear reports on our ministries and to elect new Vestry members. There are **no absentee ballots** for the election. After the meeting, we will share a potluck lunch in the Parish Hall. Please plan to be with us.

VESTRY NOMINATIONS

Paul Hance, Tim Lindblom and Page Sevier, who are completing their terms on the Vestry, are the Nominating Committee for the Vestry.

Nominees are needed. If there is someone you would like to nominate, call that person to be sure he/she is willing to be nominated. If that individual is willing to be nominated, call Tim Lindblom to give him the person's name.

Please remember: You must be present at the Annual Meeting to vote for Vestry members. Absentee ballots are not allowed.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Average Cost Per Week
to Operate St. Paul's: \$4,645.19

Pledge/Plate Giving Per Week:
Nov 23-29 \$1964.76
Nov 30-Dec 6 \$4482.76
Dec 7-13 \$3111.76
Dec 14-20 \$3517.76
Dec 21-27 \$5082.26

Average Giving Per Week: \$3631.96

Request for Annual Reports



REQUEST FOR ANNUAL REPORTS

Reports from all groups in the parish are needed for our Annual Parish Meeting. Please submit your reports no later than January 9th. Reports are needed from the following groups/persons/ activities.

Senior Warden	Music/Choir
Junior Warden	Christian Education
Treasurer	Endowment Fund
Memorial Fund	Altar Guild
Rector	Youth
Stewardship Committee	Outreach Ministries
UTO	

Please note: If you wish to send your report via email, it is best to save it as a "Word" document and send it as an "attachment". The email address to use is stpaulsbatesville@att.net.

UTO FALL INGATHERING

It appears that folks at St Paul's had much to be thankful for since the May ingathering. The total amount collected was \$1449.50, which is almost as much as was collected the whole of 2007! AND, in addition, the Vestry voted to contribute \$500.00 from the church funds, making the amount sent to the State UTO chairman a grand total of \$1,949.50! Good job! Let's remember that every coin dropped in our blue boxes helps spread The Word and helps those less fortunate than we are.

(Laura Parks, UTO Chairman)


Happy New Year!

Clergy Search Update

The Search Committee wishes to update you on the latest information in our search for a new priest. As most of you may know, Canon Dennis Campbell is taking a two month leave of absence from his duties as deployment officer. Due to the passing of his wife, Rev. Peggy Bosmyer, Fr. Dennis needs time to gather himself and care for the well being of their four children. Bishop Benfield has elicited the help of Fr. Dan McKee to fill-in as deployment officer until Fr. Dennis returns for duty. Although Fr. Dan will share his deployment time with his regular duties at Trinity Cathedral, Bishop Benfield has assured us the process will go on without interruption. This is not the first time Fr. Dan has worked in deployment and is well versed in the process.

The deployment office has disclosed the names to the search committee of three candidates for our consideration. The candidates have been screened by the deployment office and are in the process of being additionally screened by our search committee. To that end, the committee has composed a standard list of questions for use during an initial phone interview phase. Depending upon how a candidate responds to the phone interview, the committee will determine whether or not a site interview will be warranted. If all three phone interviewees respond favorably, three site interviews will be scheduled. The deployment office will select two neutral sites for possible use for the site interviews. The search committee will travel to the site and observe each candidate perform a service. After the service the committee members will sit down with the priest for a second interview. Of the three candidates, one is from within our own diocese, one is from Alabama, and one is from Louisiana. It is important to know that all candidates from outside our diocese will also be subject to a face-to-face interview with Bishop Benfield.

From the clergy supply front, Rev. Pam Morgan from St. Andrews in Mt. Home has taken a new call. The open position at St. Thomas in Springdale will become her new parish January 1st. This change of parish will affect us since St. Andrews is the home parish of Rev. Anne Carriere. Rev. Anne has been wonderful to supply us clergy support during this interim period. We will miss her as she attends to the needs of her own parish and thank her for her kindness to us. On a positive note, Rev. Dennis Serdahl is due back from his most recent trip the second week in January. Fr. Dennis is also from Mt. Home, but will hopefully be able to assist us for an extended period like Lent should the need arise.

The search committee thanks you all for your interest and continued support. We will keep you posted as details develop. Please continue to exercise patience and keep us in your prayers.

(Submitted by the Rector Search Comm.)

RED DOOR CHRONICLE EDITOR NEEDED

Betty Bess, who has served as our newsletter editor for many years is resigning the position effective immediately. If your education or background is in writing or editing; or you find yourself proofreading and editing while reading for fun; or you simply love words, grammar, and composition, this volunteer job is for you. Apply to Kevin Jackson in the church office.

Clergy Supply Roster

January 4Morning Prayer
January 11.....Rev. Hap Hoffman
January 18.....Rev. Vickie Smith-Gatlin
*January 25th ...Open for now

*January 25th will be the date of the Annual Parish Meeting and election of the new Vestry members. All parishioners are highly encouraged to attend.