

Christmas at St. Paul's

Sunday, Dec. 15: Traditional children's pageant, 5 p.m. (see story at right).

Christmas Eve: Special music by the choir will begin at 8:30 p.m., with a Festive Eucharist at 9 p.m.

Christmas Day: 10 a.m. with Christmas music at 9:45 a.m.; and 5 p.m. Creole Christmas service.

Sunday, Dec. 29, 9 a.m.
 Christmas Carols and Lessons:
 There will be only one service in the morning. Join in this joyous and holy service.

New Year's Day, January 1: 11:30 am St. Paul's Haitian congregation will celebrate the Holy Name of Jesus, which is their Patronal Day. The Festive Eucharist is followed by a feast in Trinity Hall. Everyone is invited. Please Join Us!



And the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people"

Pageant Sunday, Dec. 15

To you is born this day a savior, who is Christ the Lord. This most joyous event is celebrated during the annual St. Paul's Christmas Pageant and Eucharist being held Sunday, Dec. 15, at 5 p.m.

The pageant is a tradition of 20+ years at St. Paul's. The Sunday School children from the 10 a.m. service along with the children of the 5 p.m. Haitian community reenact the story of Jesus' birth. Wearing costumes and using props made by parishioners, the children dress as animals, shepherds and angels and lead us through the streets of Bethlehem

as Mary and Joseph prepare for the birth of the baby Jesus.

Throughout the pageant the congregation will join in the celebration by singing Christmas hymns and will have a chance to approach the manger to honor the newborn baby Jesus.

Please join us, as this is more than just an occasion to celebrate the birth of our Savior, it also brings us closer to our neighbors, combining two congregations to tell one amazing story and a message of love, peace and goodwill to all.

—Laura Torrelli

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Dec. 15 is Consecration Sunday

A new metric for a healthy church

of people who are engaged in at least one activity

Two numbers are often consulted to determine the health of a congregation. One is the size of the budget and the other is the average Sunday attendance (ASA). While both are important and can be informative, neither is a particularly good indicator of a congregation's health. A comfortably endowed parish may have a budget upwards of six figures and only be sparsely attended. Conversely, a church could have a stable and even growing Sunday attendance but have few financial resources.



Over the years I have conceived of two different numbers that measure the health of a congregation better. I call the MEs and EWEs. MEs stands for ministry engagement. EWEs stands for Extra Weekly Engagement.

MEs, ministry engagements, is the number of people involved in at least one ministry. How many of our parishioners are involved in Vestry, Home Visitors, Finance Committee, Altar Guild, Ushering, Eucharistic Ministers, or any of the other ministries in our parish? This is an important number because it is within these ministries that we engage our faith, practice our gifts and serve God and others.

EWEs, Extra Weekly Engagements, is the number

outside of Sunday worship. How many people are involved in ECW, Bible Study, Coffee Hours, Parish Lunch Out or other events? These are activities that build community, in which we make connections that support friendship, hospitality and pastoral work.

These are both difficult numbers to ascertain. They necessarily require that the person compiling and assessing them knows the members as well as the ministries and activities of the parish. It is my goal to assess our MEs and EWEs during the month of January. I will be seeking to determine how many of our faithful worshippers are practicing their ministries and

connecting with our community at St Paul's.

These are important numbers in assessing the health of a parish because they measure how seriously we practice our gifts as well as how connected we are in our shared life of faith. While budgets go up and down and ASA waxes and wanes, particularly in places like Naples, a congregation in which 50% or more of its regular worshippers are working and sharing their lives together is a healthy parish regardless of its budget or its average Sunday attendance. I am very curious to determine the health of St Paul's.

Some other numbers

As the year winds down, we begin putting together next year's budget. To do this properly and accurately, we need help from the vestry with regards to areas they oversee. We do our best to predict costs by month(s) that the expenditures will occur. We look for ways to reduce costs and at the same time maintain or improve efficiency.

In 2019, due to vestry efforts, we increased our number of pledges and the pledge amounts. Through Oct. 31, 2019, our contribution income has increased by 19% versus 2018. Our overall income

(Farmers' Market + contribution income + rental income, etc.) increased by 8.11%. These are excellent trends that we hope will continue.

On the negative side, our year-to-date expenses are up 23% versus 2018, leaving us with a deficit. Obviously, the vestry will be working hard to try to turn this situation around by looking for other sources of revenue, increasing the size of the congregation, and reducing costs wherever practical. We welcome help and suggestions from anyone in the church. With God's help, we will succeed.

—Dave Abernethy, Treasurer

Have you met...?

...Ferb and Carol Tracy

Ferb and Carol Tracy met on a blind date while attending Duke University. Carol was there partly because her family had moved to Durham, N.C. when her father, James, accepted an appointment as comptroller at Duke. Her dad was also a Duke alumnus and Carol grew up thinking that that would be her choice as well. Ferb had selected Duke following high school graduation from Hotchkiss Prep in Lakeville, Conn., to pursue a BA and attend law school.

The blind date was followed a year and a half later by an elopement when the couple married while still undergrads.

Carol's path to that fateful blind date began on Jan. 31, 1943, when she was born in Manhattan, N.Y., to James and Ruth Cousins. Six months later her dad enlisted in the Navy and they moved first to Massachusetts, and then Washington, D.C. while he was in training. Then she and her mother moved to Georgia to live with relatives while her father served as an officer in the South Pacific during WWII. After the war, James took the position at Duke and Carol gained a baby sister, Joan, who, with her spouse, now travel around the country in their RV. The family moved on to Arlington, VA where James took another comptroller position. There tragedy struck when her father unexpectedly died from a ruptured appendix. Carol was 16 at the time. She graduated high school at Mt. Vernon Seminary in D.C.

Meanwhile, Ferb's journey to his



blind date with Carol began just 19 days prior to Carol's birth and across the Hudson River in Jersey City, N.J. His parents, Evelyn and Scott Tracy, moved the family to Lakeview when he was 12, where he completed high school and moved on to Duke and his ultimate date with Carol.

Following law school, Ferb and Carol moved to ("Pardon me boy, ..."), Chattanooga, Tenn., where Ferb practiced law for 47 years. The

Tracys have three children: Lisa, their "undergraduate baby;" Scott, their "law school baby;" and Jennifer, their "caboose and career baby." They have nine grandchildren and four great grandchildren spread across the country from Brooklyn, to Boise, to Peyton Colo. and Oakland, Calif. When you get a chance you must ask Carol or Ferb about their offer to the grand kids of a trip with gramps and granny (no parents), to "somewhere in the world" when they turn 13 or 14.

Carol's career began with teaching first grade and kindergarten and later teaching pre-algebra through pre-calculus for eleven years at a girls preparatory school which her daughter attended.

In addition, Carol incorporated a non-profit national honor society in psychology for two-year colleges. Her mother had served as an executive officer of an already established similar society for four-year and graduate schools named Psi

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Ferb and Carol with daughter Jennifer her daughters, their three youngest grandchildren, last Easter Sunday at St. Paul's



From left, Eleanor Phelps, Barb Kling, Barbara Abernethy, Katie Judnich and Joyce Cashin, at Christmas luncheon

Christmas Preview in Trinity Hall

Episcopal Church Women (ECW) enjoyed a delicious Christmas luncheon Dec. 4 catered by Two Guys. A very special treat this year was a time to sing carols with our own choir director, Eleanor Phelps, at the piano and choir member Nora Broszeit directing us. As always, our very generous members brought unwrapped children's

gifts which will be distributed to needy families by our local Fire Department. Jeff Page transported our gifts to the fire station for us.

The luncheon was planned by program chair Van Geoghegan, assisted by Katie Judnich who provided beautiful decorations.

Father Tom joined us for lunch and he is going to be our program

in January on Wednesday the 8th so don't miss it! Everyone is welcome! Come for food, fun and fellowship at 9:30 followed by Father Tom's program at 10 a.m. A brief business meeting will follow at 11 a.m.

Many thanks for a lovely event to Eleanor, Nora, Katie, Van and Jeff.

—Barbara Kling

Have you met...? from previous page

Chi. Ergo, Carol's community college off-shoot was dubbed Psi Beta, and she served as its executive director for 24 years. When her mother retired, Carol served as the Psi Chi financial officer.

The Tracys found their way to Florida and eventually Naples around 2009 when they made a trip to meet Ferb's half brother, Dwight, in Port Charlotte. Ferb was diagnosed with Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus in 2013. He had brain shunt surgery in 2014, and two weeks later the couple drove to Fort Myers Beach to find a condo. Following a two-year stay in Bonita Springs, they purchased their current villa in Naples.

Ferb's church attendance began as a Lutheran in his youth. Carol's

was Methodist. As a couple they tried the Unitarian church in Durham, then in Chattanooga, they attended three Presbyterian congregations where they both taught Sunday school. Ferb also served as a deacon at one. Daughter Jennifer eventually influenced a switch to the Episcopal church because one of her best friend's dad was rector.

When the couple came to Naples they, "...tried several churches, including St Paul's, but did not find what they were looking for." Carol received an email from St. Paul's announcing that Deacon Mary was offering a Sunday morning class, "Reading the Bible in 90 Days," and decided to attend. Carol relates, "Father Tom participated with interesting insights, so we decided to try St. Paul's once more. That

first sermon was enlightening... and the parishioners were delightful, welcoming, and warm." The Tracys were "hooked"!

Ferb and Carol credit Bill and Barb Kling for encouraging them to get involved in church ministries. Together the couple serve as ushers at the 10 a.m. service. Carol can be found volunteering at the front desk in the office on Tuesdays, and in the Unique Boutique on Saturdays.

If you have not yet personally met Ferb and Carol please find an opportunity to do so and as a bonus be sure to ask about the incident involving the police (including S.W.A.T.) at their home on an Easter Sunday.

—Ken Eastlack

Singing is good for you!

One thing is sure about Nora Broszeit—she loves to sing! And she has good reason, and maybe good genes to boot. Her grandfather and Frank Sinatra's father are from the same town in Sicily. "I'm still trying to find out how we are related."

Asked by the *Pathway* staff to write a recruitment piece for the choir, of which she is a member (of course!) she proffered a sheaf of materials proving singing is good for your body, mind and spirit.

While the evidence is impressive, as it's presented by researchers and professors with lots of letters after their names, it's Nora herself who is a walking advertisement for people to join the choir.

At a parish supper a while back, she regaled us with a couple of arias and an Italian street song from early in the last Century, led



us in "Irish Eyes are Smiling" at Canon Grey's reception earlier this year, and recently led the women of the church in caroling.

If you're interested in learning more about the physical, social and mental benefits of singing, just Google "Why we should sing."

Meantime, here's how Nora wrapped up her piece:

The conclusion of all the research is that singing helps to improve quality of life. Singing is not everybody's talent to develop, but it is a tool everybody has for personal use. You will become a lasting, positive influence on children and grandchildren if you let them hear you sing.

So now that you have read all the good things that come from singing, won't you join us in the choir where we sing God's praises? It is said that singing is like praying twice. The only qualification is if you can carry a tune; not all of us read music. You can show up at rehearsal on Fridays from 1-3 o'clock. We also come early on Sunday (9 a.m.) to practice in church between services. Come join our friendly group.

A note from the senior warden

2019 has been an interesting year. It started with the installation of Fr. Tom Thoeni by Bishop Smith as our new rector. What a great way to start the new year! I am sure that you all agree with me that Fr. Tom's sermons are always a marvel: succinct, on point and interesting.

The vestry has been busy this year on a variety of subjects. The members are listed each week in the bulletin but I would like to again set forth all their names: Don Anderson, junior warden, Dave Abernethy, treasurer, Judy Allen, Joyce Cashin, Charlene Connolly,

Dick Emerson, Van Geoghegan, Yvon Hive, Peter Lund and Lee Perry. As you see them around St. Paul's, please thank each one for all their service. Not only do they serve on the vestry but they are all involved with many other ministries. St. Paul's would be a very different and a less fulfilling place without them. In honoring vestry members, I am not in any way forgetting all the other members of our congregation who add so much to all of our ministries. As Fr. Tom reminded us on Dec. 8, we, the congregation, are in the forefront of our ministries.

Consecration Sunday is Dec. 15. I hope that all of you will return your 2020 pledge cards on the 15th. (If you forget to bring your pledge, please bring it with you on the next Sunday or mail it to the office at 3901 Davis Blvd., Naples, FL 34104). Unfortunately, 2019 ends with a large deficit. Such deficits cannot continue for long without serious consequences. Please help us to continue Shining our Light.

Have a happy and joyous Christmas and a Happy New Year.

—Dick Breithaupt, senior warden

Gift Shop & Boutique now open

The *Courtyard Gift Shop* and *Unique Boutique* opened on Nov. 9, coinciding with the new season of the St. Paul's Farmers' Market. The gift shop had excellent sales on the first day and continues to do well each week. Both shops are open during the Farmers' Market on Saturdays and the gift shop after the 10 a.m. Sunday service.

Gift Shop

We have many lovely new items which were donated by our parishioners and friends. Some items have been marked down for immediate sale and you can find a great selection of Christmas gifts for sale at half price! We have a wide selection of gifts and we have saved some of our best items for the Bazaar, which will happen on Jan. 25 (Mark your calendars!)

All proceeds are donated to multiple charities through the ECW as our way of outreach to the community. Susan Larson and Marilyn Perry are fortunate to have several new and returning volunteers to help with the shop, including Katie Judnick, Joyce Cashin, Joan Menslage, Bev Whiteman, Lynn LaMarca, Bev Sweet and Darlene Shoemaker.

You can always find a bargain at our gift shop. Stop by now if you are looking for that special holiday gift or if you want a little something for a friend or for yourself.

—Diane Kane

Unique Boutique

Have you been to the Unique Boutique?

Our shop offers a lovely selection of gently used (and some new)



women's clothing. We have a wonderful selection of merchandise this season. Come in and find a beautiful outfit for the holidays or pick up a dressy top, stylish dress, jacket or a pretty scarf or pocketbook, all at very reasonable prices.

We also have a large collection of sweaters, jackets, and even some hats, if you are going North this winter. Our sportswear department has a large array of pants, capris, shorts, and summer



tops ranging in size from petite to extra-large. In addition to our regularly low, low prices, we offer sales on selected items throughout the year.

Stop by, shop, have some fun, and support St. Paul's. All proceeds from purchases go directly to the church. If you would like to volunteer at the shop or donate some of your gently worn clothing, please let us know. We look forward to seeing you at the Unique Boutique!

'Smile' for St. Paul's

You can support St Paul's while shopping on Amazon! Amazon Smile donates 0.5% of your purchases to a charity of your choice.

Log in to [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com), using your regular Amazon login.

On your first visit to the site you select a charitable organization to receive donations. Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at [smile.amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) will result in a donation. AmazonSmile will

occasionally contact you about donation amounts disbursed to your chosen charity or about the program.

When choosing the charity to support, pick St Pauls Episcopal Church of Naples Inc.

As this article is being written I can see that my purchases have generated \$22.34 as of Dec. 8 and I haven't begun buying Christmas gifts yet!

—Fr. Tom



'All God's creatures...'

For many of us, our dogs are part of the family—and that's why we so enjoyed bringing them to St. Paul's on Nov. 16 for a blessing. We started with a short worship service outdoors behind the meditation garden—praying that “they glorify you, each in its own way, and speak to us of your beauty and love.”

Fortunately, the dogs all got along well enough, and were beginning to make new friendships in keeping with the spirit of the occasion.

We recalled images from the Psalms, in which God's creatures are praised. “In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.... These all look to you to give them their food in due season...they are filled with good things.”

Fr. Tom also remembered the dogs we have lost, praying “May they sleep on in the eternal slumber of your godly care.” He had recently lost one of his own, so it was a heartfelt prayer. We will always treasure the memory of the pets whose short lives we are

blessed to have shared.

Then Fr. Tom gave each of the dogs a personal prayer. My own Emily Dickinson (it's an English-teacher thing) warmed up to him right away, and I was amazed that Fr. Tom included an image from one of Dickinson's poems in his prayer!

The custom of praying together for our animals is usually celebrated around Oct. 4, the day devoted to the memory of St. Francis, often called the patron saint of animals. Stories abound of his kinship with God's creatures. My favorite is the one about the wolf—it was terrorizing the town, and St. Francis decided to confront it. The other monks were afraid and refused to go with him, but he bravely walked right up to the wolf and blessed it. The animal, of course, changed immediately and made peace with everyone.

We hope that all of us whose animals were blessed will live on in the spirit of St. Francis for many years.

—Barbara Metcalfe





We're thinking. We're thinking...

Trivia Sunday again in January

Ask anyone who attended last year 's inaugural Trivia Sunday and the response will be something like, "We had a ball," or "Great fun!"



It's time to get your team of six together and bone up on 57-year-old pop culture, sports and general knowledge. (57 because...ask Fr. Tom).

Deacon Mary will be back, flashing the questions on the screen for teams to ponder and agree on an answer. Her husband, Jan, will check the responses and tally the results.

Whether your team wins or loses, everyone wins! There are prizes, table snacks (and you're encouraged to bring your own snacks and drinks). The \$17 per person will go to an outreach of St. Paul's.

Jan. 26 is the Sunday between NFL playoffs and the Super Bowl, so there's no reason to stay home at 2 p.m. that Sunday! Mark calendars.

