

THE CHRIST CHURCH CONNECTION

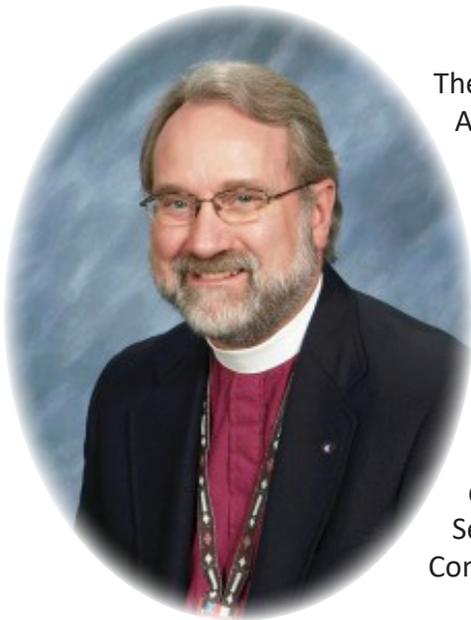
THE NEWSPAPER OF THE MOTHER CHURCH OF THE DAKOTAS



September 2020

In Loving Memory

Rt. Rev. John Thomas Tarrant



The Rt. Rev. John Thomas Tarrant, former bishop of South Dakota, passed away Aug. 24 of an apparent heart attack, according to a pastoral statement issued by Western Massachusetts Bishop Douglas Fisher. Following his retirement as bishop, Tarrant began serving as an interim at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, in May 2019.

Tarrant was consecrated bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of South Dakota on Oct. 31, 2009, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He became diocesan bishop on Feb. 2, 2010.

Tarrant was born in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1952 and raised in rural Michigan. He graduated from Michigan State University in 1974 with a political science degree and received his master of divinity degree from Virginia Theological Seminary in 1983. He has served congregations in Western Massachusetts, Connecticut and South Dakota:

1983-1985: Curate, Church of the Atonement, Westfield, Massachusetts;

1985-1989: Rector, St. Paul's, Gardner, Massachusetts;

1989-1991: Assistant, St. Paul's, Holyoke, Massachusetts;

1991-1996: Missioner, Greater Waterbury Episcopal Ministry, Middlebury, Connecticut;

1996-2005: Rector, St. Paul's, Stockbridge, Massachusetts;

2005-2009: Rector, Trinity Church, Pierre, South Dakota.

Upon his retirement as bishop, Tarrant returned to Western Massachusetts.

"His pastoral presence was a great blessing to the people of St. Stephen's. His support of the Cathedral of the Beloved and the under-housed in the city resonated with John's lifetime commitment to forming 'beloved community.' His passion for justice motivated John's witness at Standing Rock. His humble ministry among indigenous people made John a wonderful storyteller of God's love for diversity. While this loss is especially local, it is felt churchwide. The House of Bishops mourns John today as we remember a colleague and friend," wrote Fisher.

Tarrant is survived by his wife Pat and their children.

NEW VESTRY MEMBERS

We welcome Barb & Ron as new members of the Vestry!



My name is Barbara Lyle, I am a lifelong Episcopalian. I was born and raised in Sioux City, Iowa and attended St. Thomas Episcopal Church.

I attended St. Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas to live closer to my sister Libby. After graduating from TCU, I moved back to Sioux City and received my

Master's degree from USD and began working as a Speech Language Pathologist in Sioux City, Iowa.

Our family growing up spent summers at our cabin on Lewis and Clark Lake and when my mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease she and my father moved back to South Dakota from Florida. After my mother died in 2007 my father and I became regular members of Christ Episcopal Church. My father died in 2014 and at that time my sister and her husband built a house next to our childhood cabin.

My husband Roger and I decided to build a house on the same spot and live there full time. We have 3 grown children living in Sioux City. Our oldest and youngest are both married with 5 grandchildren between them. In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my grandchildren, reading, taking walks with my sister while discussing many topics from our dogs to TV.



My name is Ron Mugge and I was born in Elora, IA and raised in Calumet, IA. In 2017 I accepted a job with Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home & Crematory.

I graduated from Iowa Lakes Community College in 1979 with an Associate of Applied Science degree.

After two years of employment, I returned to college for one year, and then the following year I attended professional school, graduating from Dallas Institute of Funeral Service in 1983. I became a licensed funeral director and embalmer in the State of Iowa in 1984, and was licensed in South Dakota in 1994, North Dakota in 2000, and in Minnesota in 2017.

After obtaining my Iowa funeral director's license, I worked for Baumgarten Funeral Homes in Spencer, Iowa. I went on to serve families in New Mexico, Texas, Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota and Arizona.

I am involved with the Masonic Lodge, the Scottish Rite, the York Rite, and the Shrine. I also served communities as a Rotarian and a Lion over the years. The Iowa State Fair, and the Clay County (Iowa) Fair are also a part of my interests, as well as the Turner Hall Society in New Ulm, Minnesota.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

BY
NORM WRIGHT

As this Summer comes to a close, my personal assessment of it is that it has been a rollercoaster ride when it came to searching for a priest, holding services at the church, and then having to step back from holding services at the church for a period of time due to the rise Covid-19 cases in the county. Things certainly have been in flux, and we may be faced with this normal for the foreseeable future.

Summer started out on a hopeful note with our Search Committee having two candidates to consider for the position of rector. Unfortunately, neither of those prospects came to fruition. I recently spoke to a priest who told me of a parish that was without a priest for seven years before one came along. The truth is some parishes within our diocese have been subsisting without a priest for years.

The silver lining in this pandemic is that it has created what I call a “pause;” a period of time that can lead to transfiguration. A pause can create a transformative bridge between what is to a new way of being, a new way of seeing, and a new way of being seen. The fact is we don’t need a priest right now; at least, not with a pandemic continuing to create uncertainty. In addition, this pause allows us to consider the implications caused by a priestly profession that, from all appearances, seems to be going the way of organists; becoming a dying breed. As this pandemic surges on, and with the lack of available candidates, a question comes to mind, “Do small church’s have to worry about closing their doors simply because there isn’t a priest available to serve them?” The fact is (and it is a fact) our congregation has enough financial means to continue without a priest for years. In my opinion, what will close any church’s door is not the lack of ordained clergy but the lack of its members’ willingness to take on the responsibility of that church’s growth and vitality within the community it resides.

I do not say that as a criticism of our membership, which has demonstrated it can be very active in the community, but rather to say we may need to refocus our membership activity towards taking on a greater role in facilitating our parish’s worship, mission, pastoral care, and sacramental life; in other words, to engage in our roles as members of the royal priesthood of all the faithful. [1Peter 2:9] Small congregations which do not have the adequate funds to support a part-time or full-time priest’s \$35,000.00+ to \$70,000.00+ annual financial package could do a lot with that sort of money (beyond keeping their church’s lights on) by providing new ministries or supporting existing ministries in their communities and in the dioceses they belong to.

Unfortunately, over the centuries, we have been indoctrinated to believe that the sacraments are dependent on having an ordained priest or consecrated bishop administer them. Through indoctrination congregations have become dependent on a parental figure called a priest or pastor who inadvertently but functionally treat members of their congregations as children. In fact throughout the history of Christianity priests, being called Father, have referred to members of their congregations as children or “My child.” Although it sounds benign enough and rather endearing, it conveys a sense of co-dependency.

Paul wrote, “When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways.” [1 Corinthians 13:1]. How can a church’s members spiritually grow up when they are consistently treated as children who don’t know how to act on their own and who are not permitted to fully do so?

There is perhaps nothing sadder than an aging adolescent or a child who has grown old before growing up, but that is what many congregations have become because of ecclesial hierarchies insisting on the need for a parental figure (ordained clergy) to keep their members from fully sharing in the royal priesthood of all the faithful; as in, prohibiting the laity from administering the sacraments. Many mainline denominations have come a long way in loosening the reigns of worship to allow for lay readers, lay preachers, Eucharistic ministers, ordained women, and LGBTQIA+ clergy; all of which I applaud, but most maintain hard and fast control of the “means of grace,” the sacraments themselves. It is at the sacramental level that churches, such as ours, feel trapped and held hostage to the perceived necessity of having the services of a priest.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT (CON'T)

Where two, three, or more people are gathered together in Jesus' name is becoming the norm for worship service attendance in the small parish, the promise of Jesus's presence is assured. [Matthew 18:20] It is Jesus whose presence enables sacramental life. The sole purpose of the sacraments is to bring to mind God's freely given grace in Christ Jesus to all the world. The sacraments are not the means by which grace is conveyed but rather, through the means of sign, symbol, and word, God's free and constant grace is given meaning and brought to mind within the community of the faithful. "Do this in remembrance of me" is the earliest recollection of Jesus' mandate as recorded by Paul in 1Corinthian 11:24.

Jesus' presence is not contingent on the presence of a priest. Likewise the sacraments are not contingent on their being consecrated by an ordained priest but rather by the coming together of a faithful community consecrated by the Holy Spirit in Jesus' name. The sacraments, which symbolize and call to mind the freely given grace of God, cannot be held hostage by the dictates of ecclesial dogma, canonical laws, or a prayer book's rubrics. That which God freely gives cannot be constrained by human law or will. Dogmas can be shelved as historical relics, canon laws and rubrics can be changed, but the living Word of God remains constant.

The early church did not grow because of priests but because early congregations, being led by the Holy Spirit, spread the good news and did works of righteousness in their communities. Sacramental services (Baptisms and Holy Communion) were initially conducted in the homes of these early Christians. It is not known if there was any particular leader who performed them. Being modeled after Judaism, it is suspected that the head of a Christian household would have been the designated leader. Leadership is important in a church, but as the early Church demonstrated, leaders of these nascent congregations were raised up from a local church's congregation. They were not hired hands from some outside professional human resource pool.

We live in an era that is being described as post-Christian. The Church is losing and has lost much of its political and social clout that it fought over for centuries in many Western nations. That is not bad news. In many ways Christianity needs to lose such things in order for it to retain and maintain its prophetic voice in the world.

The Church of today is in need of a true re-formation, a new re-ordering of its processes and resources to meet the needs of the day; especially, where the small congregation is concerned. I am not saying this because I think priests are not important, but rather to say they are not essential to the administration of the sacraments.

No congregation should be forced to refrain from the regular use of sacraments because priests are not readily available. No congregation should be forced to close its doors because it can't afford the services of a priest. No congregation's ministry should be put on hold due to a lack of ordained priest.

With all of that being said, I would conclude that our small congregation is in a good place at the moment. It is largely able to meet the needs of its membership and pay its obligations. It is my hope and prayer that we are open to God's will for each of us and for our congregation. If that leads to finding a priest who will serve our congregation faithfully, I will say, "Amen." Let it be so.

If, however, we continue to see a lack of ordained candidates cross our path or we sense God leading us in a new direction, then we should be open to that sense and to whatever possibilities God leads us towards. Challenging times provide opportunities for creativity in meeting one's needs.

I have a sense within this lull and dearth of people entering into the field of ordained ministry the possibility of the Holy Spirit leading the Church in a new direction; away from its hierarchal past to an inclusive, vibrant priesthood consisting of all the faithful; a direction that will allow for an adult Church to emerge retains and maintains its prophetic role in guiding humanity towards becoming the Family of God.

SERVICES CANCELLED

Due to the rising numbers of Covid-19 cases in Yankton County, all services at Christ Church are cancelled for the month of September.

Decisions for October services will be made at the next Vestry meeting on September 27th.

BANQUET

Christ Church is scheduled to serve the Banquet on Thursday, September 10. Due to Covid-19 the Banquet has only been offering carry-out meals for the guests. They have asked that we just provide the food and the Banquet staff will do the rest.

The plan is to provide our regular menu of chicken. We still will need monetary donations to purchase the food. Any amount will be gratefully accepted. Please send it to Christ Church, Dick Unruh, or call me and I will pick it up.

ANNOUNCEMENT

September 10, noon to 4 p.m. Church Undercroft will be open for anyone wishing to purchase our item, namely; Episcopal bean soup mix, cutlery, and dish cloths.

Pecans will be shipped in early November, if you want to preorder, but not necessary. Kathy Wright & Gert B. will be available

Cookies for the Banquet, also may be delivered at that time.



September

- 3 Roy Lauck
- 8 Emma Hershfeldt
- 14 Matthew Dykstra
- 17 Elizabeth Bigley
- 21 Richard Unruh, Jr.
- 25 Colin Neubauer-Keyes
- 28 Kati Stanage



September

- 4 Gary & Somer Bares

VESTRY

7/26/2020

Present- Barbara L., Steve A. Dawne U., Dick U.,Janelle, Kwen, Shann D., John K.

Kwen opened the meeting with an opening prayer

Steve opened the meeting with a motion to accept Shann D. to fill the remainder of Barb Black's term, Kwen seconded it and it was unanimously passed.

Treasurer's report- Dick reported we are financially solid, investments are almost back to where they were before the virus, Steve motioned to approve the report Janelle seconded it and the motion carried.

Jr. Warden report- the AC on the East side of the building has problems and all others are working ok it is recommended we think about replacing that unit at some time, Steve will get someone out to give an est. John suggested the handrail by handicapped ramp be re welded, Steve made a motion to do this -Dawn seconded-motion carried. Steve is getting 3 estimates to replace front steps. (Gert will be re-applying for a grant to use for this project). This is tabled till next spring. John had some of his guys replace several sprinkler heads-they are fully functional now. Yankton home and Garden are doing the lawn. Dick suggested putting sand in the brick walkway to the rectory, Steve will pick some up.

Old business- Search committee- an invitation has been extended to Mother Janet. She is also interviewing in two other places in South Carolina, Dick has not heard anything back from her. A zoom meeting will be held with the Bishop and Dick and Norm when the Bishop returns from Vacation the first part of August. Ron will be approached to become the Senior Warden.

Steve motioned for a closing prayer and Kwen led.



Christ Episcopal Church September 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 The Banquet	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Vestry Meeting 11 AM	28	29	30			