

TIDINGS

St. Paul United Church of Christ
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Interim Pastor - Rev. George Reed
Minister of Christian Education - Pastor Cheryl Schalm

February 2023

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday February 5th - Church Service and Sunday School - 10 a.m.
Communion
Souper bowl VII Fellowship Hall 11 a.m.

Sunday February 12th - Church Service and Sunday School - 10 a.m.

Thursday February 16th - Blood Drive - 1 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.

Saturday February 11th - Make Coleslaw - 9 a.m.

Sunday February 19th - Church Service and Sunday School - 10 a.m.

Wednesday February 22nd - Ash Wednesday Service - 7:30 p.m.

Sunday February 26th - Church Service and Sunday School - 10 a.m.

MESSAGE FROM OUR COUNCIL PRESIDENT

As council members were installed into their new positions it's probably fair to say many noticed differences. Our beloved Rev Geoff was not there. The tradition of presenting the Reinhold Niebuhr Serenity Prayer plaque traditionally given to the incoming Council President in front of the congregation did not happen. The tradition was not forgotten and will be renewed when the next Council President is installed with the previous Council President passing the Serenity Prayer to the next Council President. Niebuhr's Serenity Prayer is part of our tradition, a part of our history, a part of our identity and a part of our church profile that is used to attract



pastoral candidates to be our next Settled Senior Pastor.

In the Broadway play, ***Fiddler on the Roof***, The fiddler, as Tevye tells the audience, represents **the fragile balance of life in the village**. Tevye asks the audience, "How do we keep our balance?" Tevye enthusiastically answers: **TRADITION!** Unknown to most in the congregation, Rev Geoff as a parting gift, presented his last Reinhold Niebuhr Serenity Prayer to your 2023 Council President privately in his office as he began packing. He kept the tradition going, yet it was different. The private presentation held words slightly different that accompanied the Serenity Prayer detailing positions served (excerpted):

This cherished prayer was penned by the Reverend Reinhold Niebuhr, an ordained United Church of Christ pastor and major 20th Century theologian who served Bethel Evangelical Church in Detroit. He attended his first clergy conference at St. Paul Evangelical Church in Taylor, Michigan (today St. Paul United Church of Christ) in 1915:



God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardships as the pathway to peace; taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to His Will; that I may be reasonably happy in this life and

supremely happy with Him forever in the next. Amen.

As much as tradition is cherished in the fashion Tevye proclaimed, transitions throughout history enjoy crashing tradition's party. Throughout Biblical history, transition was always in play for the nation and the people of Israel, much of it self-inflicted:

- **The Patriarchs.** The first leaders of the nation of Israel were the original "patriarchs," Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- **The Judges.** After the period of the Patriarchs, Israel fell onto hard times and ended up as a slave nation to Egypt.
- **Moses led captive Israel out of Egypt.**

- Joshua succeeds Moses in the Tent of the Meeting (Deut 31:14, 23) to lead Israel into the Promised Land.
- Israel had no single leader after Joshua died. The tribe of Judah led Israel and the priestly tribe of Levi led worship
- The United Kingdom. Though God had never intended to install a king over his people, the Israelites grew jealous of the prestige and power that monarchs seemed to bring to their surrounding nations.
 - Saul reigned over Israel 1050-1010 BC
 - David reigned over Israel 1010-970 BC
 - Solomon reigned over Israel 970-930 BC
- The Divided Kingdom (Israel the Northern Kingdom; Judah, the Southern Kingdom). Soon after Solomon's death, a controversy grew over who would be the next king over Israel.
- The exile and return. Because God had promised to be faithful to his people, eventually God led Cyrus, the King of Persia who had conquered the Babylonians, to allow Israel to regather as a nation in their ancestral homeland.

Our own transition continues. Our Congregation welcomes a new pastoral leader – Interim Minister Rev George Reed in February. As the Search Team endeavors to bring a settled pastor to the Congregation to Call and as we transition to our future let us be mindful of ***Teveye's Fiddler on the Roof*** keeping our fragile balance in the life of our congregation, working together with each other in Jesus the Christ and in so doing keeping our congregation United, not Divided. To borrow the words from Pastor Cheryl Schalm in a recent conversation: ***Everyone's opinions, concerns, and thoughts are important. Some things we will just see differently. And that's okay. As long as we are willing to look at it from the other's perspective*** and add to her comments: ***validate each other's feelings***. However, we cannot validate and address concerns and feelings if we do not communicate with each other and instead spread destructive, baseless rumors. As your Council President, I invite you to approach me with your concerns and feelings on any subject be it the budget, the pastoral search or anything else church related and I will respond with the best servant leadership I can with the aid of God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. My contact information is below and I also offer to meet you in person if you prefer.

In closing, as we transition to our future under new pastoral leadership with Interim Minister Rev George Reed, let us keep Rev Reinhold's Serenity Prayer handy, let us keep the faith and spread it as Jesus taught, let us keep our balance in the life of our congregation as the Fiddler on the Roof and cherish our traditions while we embrace our future welcoming Rev George Reed to the pulpit as our Interim Minister guiding us through transition. As Jesus taught his disciples in Mark 10:27 (ESV) "; all things are possible with God."

Serving in Jesus the Christ,

Aaron B Johnson, President St. Paul UCC Taylor, Michigan USA

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Through Jesus the Christ we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in the hope of sharing the Glory of God. Romans 5:2.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION EDITORIAL

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.” ~ 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

While the official day to recognize volunteers is not until April 20th, I believe it imperative to do so more regularly. I am a firm believer that showing appreciation and recognizing the contributions of those who give their time, share their resources and use their talents and gifts in the service of others is crucial to the morale and well-being of any organization or individual. Regardless of in what capacity, the service rendered or the amount of resources given, scripture tells us that it is the heart in which it is given that truly matters. God loves a happy giver.

While God has blessed each of us with varying gifts, talents, and abilities and filled us with different passions in which to express and share them, every act of service given in love is noticed by Him. No matter how big or small others might deem them, all acts are worthy and valued contributions to the Kingdom of God. And how do we know this? We know it because scripture declares it.

Thus, let us lovingly encourage one another to serve. Whether you have helped to prepare coleslaw, battered fish, served or boxed fish dinners, prepared newsletters for distribution, set up, tore down and worked rummage sales, assisted with a Christian education event or activity, taught Sunday School or VBS, chaperoned a week long mission trip or youth event, organized a fundraiser, sat on a committee or council, provided weekly (and often more) technical support for the live streaming of services, developed and maintain the church website, provided endless hours to prepare the parsonage for our interim pastor, served others in God’s name beyond the walls of St. Paul, or served in any other capacity, I thank you and acknowledge you. While your contributions may not always be recognized, they are visible through the vitality and continued ministry they allow us and other organizations to provide, both inside and outside the walls of St. Paul UCC.

May God bless our ministry together here at St. Paul and in the communities in which we serve.

With Love and Gratitude for each of you,

~In Christ, Pastor Cheryl Schalm, Minister of Christian Education

Christian Education Activities

Sunday School Winter Wonderland Blast

Following worship service on Sunday, January 22nd Christian Education hosted the annual Winter Wonderland Family Fun event. Over the course of the afternoon families, church members and friends had the opportunity to partake of the waffle, donut, coffee and hot chocolate bars. Afterwards they were invited to take off their shoes for a jump in the bounce house and a glide down the slide. In addition, there were crafts to be created and s'mores to be made and ate. The day proved to be a true WINTER WONDERLAND blast – both inside and outside.

A big thank you to all you helped with the event. You are truly appreciated.

Sunday School Children to Bring Valentine Day Cheer

During the Sunday School hour on February 5th the children will be making and decorating Valentine Cards for the residence of Applewood Nursing Home. While children will be unable to hand deliver the cards due to continued health safety protocols, the cards will be dropped off at Applewood for delivery by staff on Valentine's Day.

Sunday School to Celebrate the Gift of Love During Valentine Party

On Sunday, February 12th the Sunday School children will be invited to bring Valentine cards to share with their friends at Sunday School. Following the morning's lesson, the children will be decorating valentine cookies and making a valentine craft to share with someone they love.

Rock Hard in Faith Youth Fellowship "St. Patty's Pizza and Dance" ARC outreach

In lieu of the annual ARC Valentine Dinner Dance, the youth will be hosting a St. Patty's pizza party and dance for members of the ARC/ Special Olympics downriver association. The event will take place on Saturday, March 11th. Anyone interested in making cupcakes or cookies for the event should contact Pastor Schalm.

Rock Hard in Faith Youth Winter Retreat / Ice Camp

The group will depart church at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 24th and return on Sunday around noon on February 26th. Miracle Camp & Retreat Center is located in Lawton MI.

The group will be sleeping in dorm style lodging. All meals will be provided in the cafeteria. We will have breakout sessions with youth from other churches and be worshipping together with a live band. In addition there will be plenty of free time to: tube down the tubing hill, do a little karaoke, play some dodge ball, try some broomball, do some snowshoeing, hit the game room, sit by the campfire or visit Pastor Schalm at the coffee shop!!!



If you have not confirmed your participation and would like to attend please contact Pastor Schalm

Meditation Monday's Young Adult Bible Study & Fellowship

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. - John 6:35

All post-high school young adults are invited and encouraged to join the Young Adult Bible Study group. Whether you have been a regular or are considering coming for the first time, we welcome and look forward to your company and participation. Please contact Pastor Schalm for more information.

Calling all College Students and Recent High School Graduates

Christian Education is in need of addresses of all St. Paul UCC college students and High School graduates enrolled in continuing education programs (trade school, skill programs, apprenticeships, etc.). Please forward addresses to Pastor Schalm or to the church office.

Christian Education Seeks a Nursery Attendant

As we move forward with the hope and anticipation of reopening the nursery, Christian Education finds themselves in search of a nursery attendant.

Anyone interested in caring for our youngest treasures on Sunday morning during the worship hour should contact Pastor Schalm. The attendant receives \$20.00 per service and is paid once a month. The nursery is located in the church's family room located at the back of the sanctuary. The worship service can be viewed via the television located in the family room.

ALL CHURCH EVENTS

Souper Bowl VII

Come and join us on Sunday, February 5, 2023 from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall, cost for entry is \$8.00. This will be a great time to enjoy over 20 tasty soups prepared by our own membership and local restaurants and to welcome Rev. George Reed and his wife Betty to St. Paul. Anyone interested in preparing a soup or for more information on the event, please contact Jim Poet or the church office (313) 291-1221.

Help Save a Life Blood Drive Thursday, February 16, 1:00 - 6:45 PM

Donors are needed for our next blood drive being held at St. Paul. If you are unable to donate, perhaps you can find someone that you know to donate. Hours are from 1 to 6:45 PM. Thanks for your consideration. It is important to sign up ahead of time.

Directions for sign-up.

It is important to sign up ahead of time. There needs to be 59 days between donations. Please contact Kathy Williams, if you have questions or want her to sign you up for a time slot from 1 PM – 6:45 PM. You can make appointments for/at your own convenience through the Internet. Visit www.redcrossblood.org In the upper right-hand corner, type in 48180 (the Zip code for Taylor) and click on the arrow. Then the left column will show dates for the Taylor area. Choose refine search 'refine date' range to search the calendar for February, click on 'refine results'. It will read 'St. Paul United Church of Christ' Taylor, MI 48180. Click on 'see times'. Sign up for your time slot. You will need to register & obtain a

password. IDs & passwords are case sensitive. Register for a time. On the day of the drive, you can also download to your phone or print out a Rapid Pass prior to coming to the drive. You can read the educational materials & complete the health history online to save some time at the blood drive. If you have questions about eligibility, you can look at eligibility requirements on www.redcrossblood.org or contact the Red Cross blood donation center at 866-236-3276.

Lenten Season Start Observed with Ash Wednesday Service

Lenten season at St. Paul United Church will begin with a service on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd, 7:30 p.m. For the Ash Wednesday Service, Pastor George Reed will be administering ashes prepared from the burning of palms from last year's Holy Week observance. Church members and friends will be singly invited to come forth to receive the ashes at the foot of the chancel steps at the closing of the service.

First Sunday in Lent A Communion Service

Worshippers upon arrival on the first Sunday in Lent February 26th, will receive a communion kit containing both a wafer and juice. The communion sacrament will be offered towards the close of the service. St. Paul practices an "open communion" which means that formal membership in the congregation is not required to partake of the bread and cup. However, all are asked to commit themselves to walk more closely with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. This is also a particularly important theme and emphasis for the seven week Lenten season which culminates with Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. Church members and friends are invited to make attendance at all services as part of their own Lenten discipline.

The Ash Wednesday and First Lenten Sunday services will be livestreamed on Facebook and later that evening or afternoon posted on our church website. You are encouraged to tune in if you cannot attend the in-person services.

Lenten Fish Dinners Coming - Volunteers Needed

Our congregation will be hosting six drive-through fish dinners on Fridays during the Lenten Season. The dinners will be hosted on March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, plus April 7. As in past years, the menu will include two - 4 oz. pieces of breaded wild-caught Icelandic Cod, French fries, our church's famous Cole slaw, roll with butter, and pie slice or brownie. Cost of the dinners are \$14.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children under 12.

Volunteer help is needed to host all of the dinners beginning with the preparation of the Coleslaw we serve. The Coleslaw will be made on Saturday, February 11 at 9 a.m. To volunteer, please contact Jim Poet or you may contact the church office (313-291-1221).

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congregational Meeting Approves Unified Budget and elects New Council Members

Our St. Paul congregation held its annual meeting immediately following the Sunday morning service on January 15. Reports from last year were presented either orally or in written form from our pastors, parish nurse, deacons, and trustees. Also included in the meeting booklet available for pick-up in the narthex

was a printed 2022 financial report, showing a surplus, plus the proposed unified budget for 2023. Both the 2022 financial report and the unified budget proposal for 2023 were accepted through motion and a vote of the congregation's quorum.

Another important part of the congregational meeting was the election of new Council members with a partial slate officially presented by the Trustees to the congregation. Approved for three year terms were Marjie Barnard (trustee); Pam Lange (elder), Julius Enesey (second vice president), and Jane Dykowski (secretary). Along with Aaron Johnson who is moving from his role as first vice president to president all the new Council members were formally installed during the Sunday morning worship on January 22. **We are still in need of a Deacon.** For more information, please contact one of our Council presidents.

At the close of the meeting with outgoing president Dave Lange and incoming president Aaron Johnson presiding, outgoing Council officers were thanked for the leadership they provided during their respective terms of office. Outgoing Council members are Deacon Teri Staffeld, Elder Mark Ennis, secretary Bev Gunther, trustee Michael Isaacs, and President Dave Lange.

2022 Donation Statements

The 2022 donation statements were mailed out to each household in mid January. If you have any questions regarding your 2022 statement or did not receive one please contact Annette Thie, Financial Secretary or Dan Case, Treasurer.

2023 Donation Envelopes

Donation envelopes for the first quarter of 2023 were mailed out in late December of 2022 to the members home address currently on file. Envelopes will continue to be mailed to each household with members receiving their envelopes in March, June, and September. If you did not receive your envelopes or would like to sign-up for envelopes please contact Annette Thie, Financial Secretary or Dan Case, Treasurer.

Qualified Charitable Distribution – Did you know?

The Secure 2.0 Act of 2022 has changed the age for Minimum Required Distributions from 72 to 73 years of age, however it had no impact on Qualified Charitable Distributions. QCD is a direct transfer of funds from your IRA custodian, payable to a qualified charity, St. Paul does qualify. QCDs can be counted toward satisfying your minimum required distributions (MRDs) for the year. Since it is already excluded from your taxable income, you can't take the itemized deduction (charitable donation) again. That would be double-dipping. While many IRAs are eligible for QCDs—there are requirements:

- You must be 70½ or older to be eligible to make a QCD.
- The maximum annual amount that can qualify for a QCD is \$100,000. This applies to the sum of QCDs made to one or more charities in a calendar year.
- For a QCD to count towards your current year's MRD, the funds must come out of your IRA, generally by December 31.

If you have additional questions or want to start QCD donations please contact Daniel Case, St. Paul Treasurer.

IT Ministry – Continuing to expand in 2023

As the church continues the expansion of its Information Technology (IT) needs into 2023, we are looking for volunteers who have an interest in the implementation of new technologies. We continue to utilize Facebook Live for our Sunday Services and that has been working out very well, however it has shown us that we need more than three people to successfully run our Church IT needs. As we continue to expand our live streaming capabilities in 2023, we need additional help to be successful. Experience or knowledge is not a requirement, as we will provide the appropriate training. Communication with our members and friends is one of the most important goals that we are striving for in 2023.

We are looking for people who would like to learn or assist in the following areas: WordPress Websites, Audio/Video Technologies (Streaming, Sound boards, etc.), social media (Facebook Page Accounts, Twitter, etc.) and Data Infrastructure (Computers, Software, Networks, etc.). If you are interested, please contact any member of the IT Ministry. Michael Isaacs, Gary Peters, or Dan Case

HEALTH MINISTRIES

Exercise Class Wednesday's

Join other church members and friends on Wednesday's from 10:30 -11:30 a.m. for our weekly exercise class led by our outstanding instructor Delissa. She will lead you through a variety of exercises each week. All exercises can be done in a seated position with the use of a chair, a standing position or a combination of both. Can't make it to class, but want to join us from home? Join us on ZOOM. You must be able to access the internet by computer, I-pad, or phone with video availability. You do not have to have to show on camera during class, but you will need to be able to see the instructor. You can also find the zoom link on our St Paul website under 'What's Happening' Health Activities. If you would like to participate or have any questions, contact Kathy Williams.

Our Daily Bread Devotional Availability

Daily Bread magazine is still available for pick from the Deacon or an usher on Sundays as well as through the church office. These can also be mailed to you if you wish. For a mailed copy just give Cindy Romas a call in the office Monday - Friday and she will be sure one is mailed to you.

Health Ministries is seeking volunteers to get together to discuss new ways to help keep our congregation having a healthy and full life. If anyone is interested please contact Kathy Williams

JOYS AND CONCERN

Condolences to Judy Albright on the loss of her daughter, Talama Braba who passed away January 8, 2023.

A special **Thank You** to all those people who helped prepare the parsonage for our new Interim Pastor, Rev. Reed and his wife. St. Paul Trustees

WE ASK FOR YOUR PRAYERS FOR

Church Members and Friends: Kim Beyar, Dan Case, Debbie Case, Margo Charette, John Dubke, Hayden Forsyth, Barb Gish, Kyle Hard, Carrie Hill, Wayne Jones, Judy Kirsch, Rev. Norm Kirsch, Sheila Klimek, Neil McEachern, Jeff MacZink, Michelle Mellin, Jeff Natzke, Murl Nieman, Bob Robinson, Shirley Robinson, Eleanor Rossi, Jerry Rossi, Gabriel Siadak, Sally Sigman, Beverly Sitz, Sue Spears, Sandi Rose, Joan Smarr, Dianne Sturgeon, Linda Tank, Bert Thompson, Lorelee Wilson, Shelly Wilson, and Emily Winter.

Extended Family: Rhonda Wioncek Berndt, Karen Collett, Philip and Connie Linne Alberts, Dawn Sturgeon Anderson, Mary Board (daughter, Clifford Board), Lynn Case, Josh Edelbrock, Arthur Jensen (son, Phil Jensen), Kim Cichowicz, Courtney Daoust, Joseph Gawne (husband, Rebecca Romas), Gabriella Gomez (niece, Darlene Babin), Donna Greca (friend, Peggy Staten), Raymond Harmon, Kevin & Steven Johnson (grandsons, Patricia Olson) Richard Jones, Jeff Kasher, Tom Koths, Janet Kren, Joyce LaBlanc (friend, Peggy Staten), Joanne LeFleur (daughter, Helene & Neil McEachern), Jennifer & Tammy Lee (granddaughter & daughter, Barb Siemers), Courtney McEachern Matthews, Kim McEachern (daughters-in-law, Helene & Neil McEachern), Sue Milatz, Debi Petri, Judy Robin (aunt, Lucinda Chavez), Jerry Rossi, Tammi Sherman, Kevin Siemers, Mary & Darrell Smith, Debbie Smitt, Debra Stavros, Brenda Stockwell, Nicholas Surre (great-grandson, Helene McEachern), Sharon Thompson, Bill Warner, Robin Weiner and Victoria Whitcher (daughter, Cheryl Stewart).

Congregations' Parents: Ronald & Myrna Matthews (parents, Brenda Rossi), Robert Brainard (father, Ed Brainard), Jan Filpus (mother, Julia-Joy Miller), Vicki Simon (mother, Michael Isaacs), and Bruce and Pat Vernor (parents, Eileen Vernor Drutchas).

Church Members & Friends in Nursing or Rehab Care:

Loretta Kurtzel- The Bellaire Senior Living, 12621 Hale Street, Riverview, 48193;
Esther Perry - Bellbrook Assisted Living, 873 West Avon Rd., Unit 209 H, Rochester Hills, 48307; *Eleanor Rossi* - Lakeland Nursing Center, 500 Williams St., Angola, IN 46703, *Melissa Rossi* -17652 Colgate, Dearborn Heights, 48125.