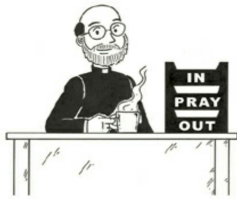


TIDINGS

St. Paul United Church of Christ
24158 Goddard Road, Taylor, Michigan 48180-3910
313-291-1221 • Fax 313-291-3305
email: stpaulucctaylor@stpaulucctaylor.org
www.stpaulucctaylor.org
Interim Pastor - Rev. George Reed
Minister of Christian Education - Pastor Cheryl Schalm

July/August 2023

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR



Dear Friends,

We have concluded our small group sessions and I have compiled your responses. Some of what was shared will be no surprise to you, some may be. Some will have you nodding your head and some may have you scratching it!

But I think it will be helpful to you to see what your friends at St. Paul had to say about your church. I hope you will take time to read through this and to reflect on it. Perhaps you might have a talk with others about the responses.

The Reverend George Reed
Interim Senior Pastor

Positives/Celebrations

The people; "Feels like home"

Relationships

Helpful

Our History

Youth Group

One big family

All the events - especially eating together

Music

Caring

Work together

Pastors wonderful

Healing service

Pastor Schalm

Church family

"My church"

Theology

Free Thinking

Enduring Friendship

Making New Friends

Doing activities together

Involvement in community

Non-judgemental

Church life a part of our life

Developing friendships

Choir's presence

Organ playing

Celebrating the People. Warm and easy to talk to.

Likes traditional hymns. No rock bands.

Likes the food

Fish and Loaves outreach

Meeting new people.

Church feels like family

Appreciated checking in from Rev. Geoff on her health situation.

Enjoys camaraderie and the people.

Love the music and organ

Christnet, Fish and Loaves and outreach.

Continuity of worship with Rev. Reed and working with us on the transition.

Rev. Geoff was very comforting when her daughter had passed away

Friendly but not pushy people

Service in the community.

Comfortable and inspiring services and sermons.

Enjoyed the church tours

Church family atmosphere

A place to call "My Church"

Theology of St. Paul expressed in sermons and music

Free Thinking

Making New Friends, Developing Friendships

Enduring Friendships

Doing Activities Together

Non-judgmental for those involved and those who choose not to be involved due to previous hurts

Church life being a part of our lives

Choir's presence.

Dynamic organ playing

Good people here. Everyone is willing to help.

Extended Family, One big family.

Everyone is very welcoming when you come through the front door.

Loved the caregivers class that was offered.

Always feel like I'm walking into God's Church

Sermons are great.

Music is good and important.

Like the new way of the light of Jesus leaving the service at the end. Feels like we now know when it is time to exit.

Concerns/Hopes

Long term sustainability of the church and the need to be less rigid relative to when things are done. ie.....Certain things are only done in the morning because that is "how we do it". This eliminates folks still working from participation.

Baptism including waters that offer wishes (with additional water) from the congregation

Concern on volunteers and the people who have always led things are no longer able to.

More volunteers

Advertise vacation bible school and maybe offering tutoring for kids.

Getting the younger generation involved.

Suggesting presence at community events to get the word out about St. Paul.

Disappointed that we hear the choir director more than hear the choir. Seems to have been corrected.

Read the names of the sick in the church and sending out cards.

More separation of church and state and Focus messages on Bible

Shrinking congregation

Facebook Live is reducing numbers in pews

Financial footing of the church

Checking in on members not seen in a while

Members checking in on others

Shrinking attendance

Lack of Youth, teens, and young adults

Church politics hurtful - limits involvement

Not having young people

Need more people in the choir

More outdoor services

Getting a new pastor

Tithing

Want to sing all the verses

- Bickering

Church leadership needs to refocus

Need to be Welcoming - Open and Affirming

Christian Education needs new programs for families

Music during communion needs to be quieter and more solemn.

Need to bring the future in without getting rid of the old ways.

Don't think the sign has the right kind of messages. Nothing uplifting to bring people in. Need to form a committee and maybe have Eric Poet do it. Charlie is making it too colorful.

A lot of churches where the young people are going have screens and live music. I feel that is more like a concert than a worship service.

Mixed Bag

Involvement is good, hurtful church politics limits involvement

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: The Ultimate Gift

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, it is he that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. – John 15:5

“The Ultimate Gift” is a novel by Jim Stovall that was made into three films which tells a story about a highly privileged, spoiled young man by the name of Jason Stevens who some may argue benefited from a trust fund or as others saw it was nearly ruined by the trust fund. The Ultimate Gift became three films: The Ultimate Gift, The Ultimate Life and The Ultimate Legacy. Jason fell in love with all the gifts life had to offer as long as he could take it to the bank. When Jason’s oil tycoon billionaire Grandfather Red passes away, Jason inherits 12 gifts to challenge him to become a better man. The sequel to the film The Ultimate Life may be considered a prequel in a way as we learn where the idea of the 12 gifts came from and how Red became a billionaire. The third film, The Ultimate Legacy focuses on the life of Joey Anderson who is guided by Jason Stevens who in turn teaches the lessons he learned from Grandfather Red to transform a troubled Joey. Jason reflected the attributes of Jesus into the life of Joey and transformed him through their relationship.

The lesson in the films is Life is how you live it, not how you spend it. And the way to live life is suggested by the Twelve gifts and Jesus lived his life demonstrating each of these 12 gifts:

- **The Gift of Work: Jesus did His Father’s work (John 5:17)**
- **The Gift of Money: Jesus taught giving to the poor (Matt 19:21)**
- **The Gift of Friends: Jesus laid down his life for friends (John 15:12-14)**
- **The Gift of Learning: Jesus learned everything from the Father (John 7:16)**
- **The Gift of Problems: Jesus teaches us not to be anxious (Matthew 6:25-34)**
- **The Gift of Family: In Jesus we are God’s children (1 John 3:1)**

- **The Gift of Laughter: Laughter shall overcome weeping (Luke 6:21)**
- **The Gift of Dreams: God declares we shall dream dreams (Acts 2:17)**
- **The Gift of Giving: Giving testimony of the Risen Christ (Acts 4:33)**
- **The Gift of Gratitude: Be grateful for receiving God’s Kingdom (Heb 12:28)**
- **The Gift of a Day: Sealed for the day of Redemption (Ephesians 4:30)**
- **The Gift of Love: The greatest of these is love (1 Cor 13:13)**

The root of each of these gifts can be found in our passage from John 15:5. The best way to receive these gifts is to cling to Jesus the Christ. A branch that is separated from the vine as Jason was in his encapsulated, trust fund financed life, Jason found himself cut off from the nutrients and true living waters found in Christ alone that bring forth the fruit of the Spirit. Jason neglected his time with Jesus in prayer, scripture reading, worship with a community of faith whenever possible, and in so doing, Jason’s capacity to serve the Christ, to reflect Christ in the lives of others suffering was muted. It was only when

Jason learned these 12 gifts that he was able to teach others and reflect the work of Christ in each of those attributes. When we remain in Christ, Jesus not only sustains us, but works through us to do great things for the Glory of God and in the lives of others.

Jesus prayed often to His Father. In John 17, Jesus prayed for His disciples and He prayed for all believers to come. Jesus prayed for you as recorded in verse 20 in the Garden of Gethsemane, **"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,..."** before his betrayal and arrest. Jesus believes in the power of prayer and devoted himself to prayer and ministry to God's Word as our example. Pray for those serving on Council, for those serving on the Pastoral Search Committee, for our Interim Senior Pastor Rev Reed, for Christian Education, and for our congregation to come in-person as each are able to join in the presence of Christ on the Holy ground of our sanctuary for worship together, for singing together, enjoying the music ministry together and taking communion together.

How can we connect in Christ Monday through Saturday? A daily study of God's Word keeps us connected in Christ.

So, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." - John 8:31-32

Being in the Word daily can change lives as Jason found in the Ultimate Gift series and as Jesus did who picked twelve unknowns nobody would have chosen to transform the world. Being in the Word transforms our future ministries in Christ and in so doing brings joy to lives around us.

Serving in Jesus the Christ,
Aaron B Johnson, President St. Paul UCC Taylor, Michigan USA
CELL: 1-313-244-2420

aaronbjohnson513@gmail.com aaron.johnson2@moody.edu

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

Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.

~ Proverbs 21:23

"Silence is one of the hardest arguments to refute." ~Unknown

Ruth Bell Graham, wife of evangelist Billy Graham, once told a humorous story about their daughters, Anne and Bunny. When Ruth ran to the kitchen to investigate some loud cries, she found three year-old Bunny holding her hand to her cheek, looking disapprovingly at her sister. "Mommy," explained five-year-old Anne, "I'm teaching Bunny the Bible. I'm slapping her on one cheek and teaching her to turn the other one so I can slap it too."

When we are wronged or offended, our first response is more likely to fight back than to turn the other cheek. But many have found that fighting back can be counterproductive.

Missionary E. Stanley Jones was being publicly slandered by someone he had once helped. Jones' first response was to write his accuser a letter he relates was "the kind of reply you are proud of the first five minutes, the second five minutes you're not so certain, and the third five minutes you know you're wrong.

Jones knew his comments would win the argument, but lose the person. "The Christian," he said, "is not in the business of winning arguments, but of winning people," and he tore up the letter. A few weeks later - without having said a word, Jones received a letter of apology from the one who had turned on him.

While the Christian way is not always the easiest way, it eventually proves to be the right way! May God grant us the patience, courage and strength to take it.

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

Christian Education Activities

Pets Unleashed, Where Jesus Cares Fur You, will serve as the theme for this year's Vacation Bible School Program. Young people and their families should mark their calendars for the week of July 10 - July 14. As always, friends and neighbors are welcome and encouraged to participate. On Monday, July 10, participants will have the opportunity to meet and hold some fun and friendly critters while they learn from a park ranger all about their habitat. Then on Friday, July 14 all participants will board a bus and head to the Willow Metro Park for lunch and an afternoon of swimming. Mark your calendars now

Let 's fetch some fun! If you are crazy for critters with whiskers, tails, feathers, or scales you won't want to miss this! This year's VBS is certain to be the cat's meow. Through fun lessons, skits, music, crafts, games and treats, the love of Jesus will be unleashed.

WHEN: July 10 – 14

WHERE: St. Paul UCC, 24158 Goddard, Taylor

TIME: 6:15 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Plan now to join your church family and to bring your friends as we learn how Jesus, God's Son lovingly cares for us.

Youth Summer Mission Trip Set for Week of July 23 - July 30

Youth Summer Mission Trip
SOS
July 23 – July 30

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith." ~Galatians 6:10

SOS: Saved, Obedient and Serving, will be the theme of this year's youth mission trip. As Christians, we are saved through the life, death, and resurrection of our Savior, Christ Jesus. As followers of Christ, we are to be obedient to His ways, sharing and teaching His word and reflecting His image and love. Over the course of the week, youth will be doing just that. Along with their chaperones and camp leaders, they will be serving children and families at the Michindoh Conference Center and Camp.

It is my hope and prayer that through witness and service offered and received, that all participates will depart with a larger heart for Christ and a greater understanding of His love and promises.

When: July 23 – July 30

Where: Michindoh Conference Center & Camp, Hillsdale MI

Time: Depart, Sunday, July 23 – 11:00 a.m.

Return, Sunday, July 30 – Approx. 5:00 p.m.

Cost: Participation in fundraisers / Spending Money for Sunday Funday

NOTE: Parent/Youth Meeting: Sunday, July 16th

Tentative Daily Schedule

6:45-8:00 a.m.

Wake up and go to breakfast

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

1 hour discipleship and Bible study meeting

1-2 hours planned activity

2-4 hours free time

2-4 hours work project

4:00 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.

Serve dinner and do clean up and dishes after

8:30 p.m. - 9:15 p.m.

Shower and hygiene time

9:15 p.m.- 10:30 p.m.

Free time

11:00 p.m.

Lights out

Sunday, July 30th/Sunday, Fun Day

We will depart camp at 10:00 a.m. after church service and head for the town of Hillsdale. We will spend the morning downtown and the afternoon at Silos Fun Park. We will return to St. Paul around 5:00 p.m.

We will eat all meals at the camp. Youth will have to bring their own bedding (sheets, blankets, pillows) and hygiene items (towels, soap, toothpaste & brush, shampoo, etc.). We will also be swimming, canoeing and such. A packing list will be provided at the parent/youth meeting. PLEASE confirm your youth's participation and return the registration form along with a copy of their health insurance card by June 25th. Contact Pastor Schalm with any questions.

Rally Sunday Scheduled for September 10th

Sunday School Rally Sunday will be held on Sunday, September 10th under the big tent in conjunction with the all church picnic. As part of the morning's worship service a special blessing of book-bags and beasts will be offered. All should plan now to remain after the service for the all-church picnic. Children's games will follow the morning service. Following lunch children and adults alike will have the opportunity to take a horse ride and visit the petting zoo. Mark your planners and watch your Morning Bulletin for more information in the weeks to come.

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

Semi-Annual Meeting was Held July 9th

The Semi-Annual Meeting of the St. Paul Congregation was held on Sunday, July 9th, immediately after the morning worship service. The meeting was brief. A mid-year financial report was shared by the treasurer as well as reports from a couple of other ministries to let everyone know what has happened at St. Paul since the beginning of 2023. If you were not able to attend and wish a copy of the packet that was handed out contact the church office.

St. Paul Men's Fellowship Ministry to host their Seventh Annual "Steak Fry"

The event will take place at the Church on Saturday, August 12th from 4:00 – 7:00 pm. The men of St. Paul will be available to assist you with the grilling of a New York Strip Steak or a BBQ Chicken Breast, your choice. Dinner will also include a Baked Potato (Regular or Sweet), Corn on the Cob, Garlic Bread, Salad, Dessert and Beverage. For an extra \$3 you can purchase an optional shrimp skewer with five pcs. of shrimp. You will want to purchase your ticket in advance to reserve your steak or chicken, since only a limited number of steaks and chicken will be available at the door for purchase. Tickets are \$18 per person and will be available at the Kiosk Table during Coffee Hour or by calling the Church Office at (313) 291-1221 or Jim Poet at (734) 718-3137. All "Grill Masters" are invited to participate, if you have any questions please feel free to contact Jim Poet, Gary Staffeld, or Dan Case. It promises to be an enjoyable evening so come on down and bring your friends.

Annual All Church Kitchen Clean-up

The St. Paul Building and Grounds Ministry will be hosting its Annual Kitchen Clean-up on Saturday, August 19, 2023. Time will be from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM. All cleaning supplies and special equipment will be provided; all you need to do is come to the church in your work clothes ready to help clean. Please plan on coming to help even if you can only stay for one hour all help will be greatly appreciated. Coffee and Donuts will be provided for the helpers. If you have any questions, please contact Gary Staffeld or Dan Case or call the Church office at (313) 291-1221.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Summer Sunday School Teachers Needed

Christian Education is recruiting summer Sunday School teachers to lead a Sunday School class over the summer. Teachers are needed until September 3rd. All curriculum and materials are provided. Please review the following list and consider signing up to teach a class over the summer. The sign-up sheet is located on the Welcome Center Desk located upstairs in the Christian Education area. Please contact Pastor Schalm with any questions. Thank you for prayerfully considering this wonderful opportunity to share your faith with the children of St. Paul UCC.

Generosity, August 6 - Faithfulness, August 13 – Gentleness, August 20 – Self-Control, August 27 – Jonah, September 3 – Solomon’s Prayer for Wisdom

Council is seeking two Elders

- Elder to complete the remaining term (ending January, 2024), vacated by Barb Shultz
- Elder to complete the remaining term (ending January, 2025) vacated by Pat Staffeld

Barb and Pat have stepped down from Council to attend to personal matters. On behalf of St. Paul Congregation we thank them for their time, talent, and service to the Council and the members of the St Paul UCC congregation.

Anyone wishing to serve in one of these Elder capacities please contact Aaron Johnson at 1-313-244-2420.

USHERS NEEDED TO ASSIST with Sunday morning worship services. If you would like to volunteer or more information, please contact Senior Deacon, Jennifer Ruffner or the church office (313.291.1221). Any time you can donate is greatly appreciated.

LECTORS ARE ALSO NEEDED for Sunday morning worship services. If you would like to volunteer or would like more information please contact Rev. Reed or Cindy Romas in the church office. No experience needed. All information is provided to you.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

2023 Budget Status

Donations for the first half of 2023 are down from last year, we are currently under budget by approximately \$38,000 from our projected income through June. The good news is that our expenses are approximately \$23,500 under budget. We continue to monitor all budget expenses and purchase only items necessary to maintain the church’s business. If you have questions or concerns about the budget please feel free to call me or see me at the church. We thank all of you who continue to contribute during these difficult times.

2023 Membership Directory

The 2023 Membership Directory is behind schedule due to issues with the publisher we are projecting publication in early July. All of St. Paul information has been submitted. We are currently awaiting the final proof book. Please contact the Church Office if you have any questions. St. Paul Communication Ministry

St. Paul Memorial Grove

Memorial Grove has two memorial trees remaining. A total of 8 trees have already been purchased. The trees are Cleveland Select Pear trees which have a beautiful white flower in the spring of the year.. You may have noticed the trees as you drive around the circle driveway. St. Paul Memorial Grove is at the North end of our property behind the Kitchen and Fellowship Hall. A \$250 donation to the Memorial Ministry will purchase one of the trees with a 12 x 12 x 6 inch granite marker under the tree. The marker can have up to three lines of inscription. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any member of the Memorial Ministry or the Building and Grounds Ministry.

Sew "N" Sew Gals to Meet Thursday, July 20 at 10 AM in the West Room. Bring a sandwich, dessert and coffee are provided. No sewing experience necessary. Join us for 'food for thought.' Contact Sharon Leonard, chairwoman, for more info.

We No Longer Accept These Items at Church

Effective immediately St. Paul will NO LONGER be recycling Inkjet Cartridges, collecting egg cartons for Fish and Loaves and the small soaps, shampoos etc. for ChristNet. Thank You for all of your support and donations in the past.

HEALTH MINISTRIES

Exercise Class Continues on Wednesday's

Join other church members 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. A small donation of \$3 to \$5 is suggested, but not expected for each class you attend.

JOYS AND CONCERN

Rose On the pulpit celebrates the birth of Francis John Block, born June 1, 2023 to Gregory & Shawn Block. St. Paul Grandparents: Jim & Paula Block. Siblings are August, Gabriel, & Silas.

Baptized Unto the Lord, Dawn Marie Irene Ellerbach, born March 25, 2023 to Michael & Kayleen Knofske Ellerbach, and baptized June 1, 2023. St. Paul Grandparents: Vern & Andrea Holton.

Condolences to the family and friends of Yvonne Koster who passed away June 3, 2023 at the age of 73 years. Funeral service is private.

Thank you to the June Merry Mailers: Helen St. Louis, Sandi Rose, and Louise Stanek.

Members Dennis and Alice Nagy no longer drive and would like a ride to and from church Sunday mornings. They live in Allen Park. Please contact them directly if you can assist them with transportation.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

FACILITY IMPROVEMENT FUND:

In Memory of: *Loretta Kurtzel* From: Thelma Poet, Jim & Diane Poet, Dan & Deborah Case, Dan & Dorothy Evison
In Memory of: *Murlyn Nieman* From: Dan & Deborah Case

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FUND:

In Memory of: *Loretta Kurtzel* From: The Kurtzel Family, Gary & Pat Staffeld, The Dykowski Family

MEMORIAL FUND:

In Memory of: *Barbara Siemers* From: William & Shirley Zabik, Juana Morales, Patrick McGorisk, Steve & Deborah Wilkerson, William & Sandy McGahey, Roseanna Brosky
In Memory of: *Loretta Kurtzel* From: James & Linda Bobcean, Roseanna Brosky, Friends & Neighbors

WE ASK FOR YOUR PRAYERS FOR

Church Members and Friends: Margo Charette, Barb Gish, Kyle Hard, Carrie Hill, Wayne Jones, Judy Kirsch, Rev. Norm Kirsch, Nancy Kittendorf, Sheila Klimek, Neil McEachern, Jeff MacZink, Jeff Natzke, Bill Pattenaude, Shirley Robinson, Sandi Rose, Jerry Rossi, Barbara Schultz, Gabriel Siadak, Sally Sigman, Beverly Sitz, Joan Smarr, Sue Spears, Dianne Sturgeon, Lorelee Wilson.

Extended Family: Rhonda Wioncek Berndt, Lynn Case, Josh Edelbrock, Arthur Jensen (son, Phil Jensen), Donna Greca (friend, Peggy Staten), Raymond Harmon, Joyce LaBlanc (friend, Peggy Staten), Sue Milatz, Debi and Al Petri, Jerry Rossi, and Jane Zeuner (friend, Sandi Rose).

Church Members & Friends in Nursing or Rehab Care:

Esther Perry - Bellbrook Assisted Living, 873 West Avon Rd., Unit 209 H, Rochester Hills, 48307; *Melissa Rossi* -17652 Colgate, Dearborn Heights, 48125. *Sally Sigman* - Atria Kinghaven, 14800 King Rd., Room 116, Riverview, 48193; Office: 734-479-5000; *Bert Thompson*, Optalis Health & Rehabilitation, 9150 Allen Rd, Allen Park; Office: 313-386-2150.