

TIDINGS

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

January 2024

Calendar of Events

Monday January 1st 2024 - HAPPY NEW YEAR - Office Closed

Sunday January 7th 2024 - Church Service & Sunday School - 10:00 a.m.

Sunday January 14th 2024 - Church Service & Sunday School - 10:00 a.m.

Sunday January 21st 2024 - Church Service & Sunday School - 10:00 a.m.
Annual Meeting of the Congregation - 11:00 a.m.

Saturday, January 27, 2024- St Paul 14th Annual Wild Game Dinner - 5:30 p.m.

Sunday January 28th 2024 - Church Service & Sunday School - 10:00 a.m.
Installation of Council Members

February 2024

February 4th - Church Service & Sunday School - 10:00 a.m.
Souper Bowl VIII - 11:15 a.m.

February 11th - Church Service & Sunday School - 10:00 a.m.

February 14th - Ash Wednesday Service - 7:30 p.m.

February 18th - Church Service & Sunday School - 10:00 a.m.

February 25th - Church Service & Sunday School - 10:00 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S FINAL MESSAGE: 2024

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2024 CONGREGATION! May 2024 Anno Domini, Latin for "in the year of the Lord" be a blessing to you and to the ministry of St. Paul United Church of Christ Taylor, Michigan. May the St. Paul Congregation call and elect a new full time settled pastor in 2024. May the congregation find a new mission that brings outreach to community needs in 2024. May the congregation find a new rallying point around the new full time settled pastor called and elected in a unified way in 2024.

Along with the New Year we have new leadership with Suzanne Mrowka stepping into the role of Council President. Our new Interim Minister Rev. Linda Anderson will provide us pastoral care, worship leadership, and counsel to our Search Team. As we move toward our future the Reinhold Niebuhr's Serenity Prayer will be handed from the outgoing Council President to President – Elect Suzanne Mrowka.

In 1915, Reinhold became an ordained pastor. The German Evangelical Mission Board sent him to serve at Bethel Evangelical Church, 2270 W Grand Blvd, Detroit, Michigan. The congregation numbered 65 on his arrival and grew to nearly 700 members under his leadership. He served as a parish minister in Detroit, Michigan for 13 years. After his ordination, Reinhold attended his first clergy conference in 1915 at St Paul Evangelical Church (St. Paul UCC Taylor today). In the years to follow the Serenity Prayer would come into publication:

God , give me grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed, courage to change the things that should be changed, and the wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time, accepting hardship as a pathway to peace. Taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it, trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your Will, so that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with You forever in the next. Amen.

As the congregation continues its transition to everything new in 2024 and beyond, the Serenity Prayer needs to be on our minds now more than ever since the day Reinhold penned those words. Challenges lay ahead, yet they are not insurmountable when we choose to come together in Christ the Lord. Hebrews 10:24-25 challenges us to come together. **And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, *not* giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.**

The Bible teaches us to encourage one another and come together instead of forming factions and divisions that only tear the faithful apart. The Bible instructs us to pray for one another and have the Holy Spirit guide us.

Romans 1:12

...that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

Ephesians 6:18

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Colossians 1:9

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives,

James 5:16

Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

May God Bless us in our understanding of these passages by encouraging one another, coming together for one another and praying for one another.

Reflect on Reinhold Niebuhr's Serenity Prayer. Pray for our new leadership on Council. Pray for our Search Team. Pray for the candidates speaking with our Search Team. Pray for our Interim Minister Rev. Linda Anderson to guide us in our transition. Call upon the Holy Spirit to direct each of our paths. Pray to be courageous about the future. Pray for one another and as we pray, may we come together and pray together not only for our membership but for the surrounding community. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide believers to St. Paul to work together to glorify Jesus the Christ. May the Holy Spirit guide the congregation toward our next mission in electing in a unified way our new full time settled pastor. In the name of Jesus, the Christ, may these prayers be answered in accordance with God's will and the good planned for the St. Paul UCC Taylor congregation in 2024.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION EDITORIAL

During the morning worship service on December 10, I was blessed with the honor of presenting a very special and well-deserved appreciation plaque to the Women's Fellowship group.

Women's Fellowship is one of the longest, continuous running fellowship groups here at St. Paul. Currently, it is three generations deep. Toni Hill, the current Chairperson of Women's Fellowship is the daughter of long-time member Karen Hill, who is the daughter of Marge Rocha, past chairperson of Women's Fellowship.

Decade after decade Women's Fellowship has served to provide social and emotional support to not only its members, but to the entire church family and beyond. They have and continue to provide an environment for women to deepen their faith and spiritual understanding through their sharing and praying together. They support one another in their struggles, challenges and faith journey.

Most importantly, Women's Fellowship fosters a sense of community and belonging among women within the church. It provides a space for building friendships and relationships which are essential for emotional support and encouragement.

This generous, wonderful community of women engage in various ministry activities, fundraisers, and charity work. They come together to provide funeral luncheons and to assist with church events and activities. They chair and assist with dinner fundraisers; and they hold the secret recipe to the St. Paul famous coleslaw. Above all these things, they are probably best known for the two annual rummage sales they host together with men's fellowship.

This dynamic group of women, most of whom are senior citizens, provide support for other ministry groups within the church. And not only do they donate their time, but also the proceeds they make from the fundraisers they host. Year after year, they have given in support of the annual youth mission trip and to numerous other Christian Education events and activities. In addition, they contribute to needed maintenance repairs and renovations here at the church. Women's Fellowship has always been and continues to be a "staple," a core part of St. Paul's ministry.

The St. Paul UCC church family is extremely blessed to have a variety of wonderful groups and individuals within our church that give of their time, talents, and treasures to support the mission and ministries of St. Paul.

Let us never forget though, that above our individual or group contributions, we are part of the St. Paul church family. And when we work together for the common purpose of serving and bringing honor and glory to our Lord, we all benefit.

May God continue to bless the Women's Fellowship and the St. Paul UCC church family as we work together to serve Him and His greater purpose.

In Christ, Pastor Cheryl Schalm, Minister of Christian Education

Christian Education Activities

Sunday School Children Present the "2023" Christmas Pageant

On Sunday, December 17th the Sunday School children presented their annual Christmas Pageant, "The Birth of Jesus." The pageant was complete with Mary & Joseph, shepherds, angels, magi, and live animals. It was a pageant to remember. And a pageant that could not have been done without the help and support of many! Thank you one and all who helped to bring "The Birth of Jesus" to life. You are greatly appreciated.

A huge thank you to all who worked in the kitchen to prepare and serve the Christmas luncheon following the Christmas pageant and to Santa for taking time out of his busy schedule to pay us a visit!

Youth Cookie Walk, A Huge Success

The Youth Cookie Walk was held after the Sunday School Christmas Pageant on December 17th. Three tables were lined with homemade Christmas cookies baked by church members. Over \$400.00 was raised for youth fellowship activities and missions.

A gigantic thank you to all who baked and donated cookies. It was one of our best displays and "sweetest" sales.

Christian Education Christmas Caring Campaign Concluded

Christian Education kicked off their Operation Christmas Child shoebox campaign on Sunday, October 29th. A total of 51 shoe boxes were collected and delivered to the collection center on November 19th.

Church members and families also had the opportunity to serve as a child's "Angel" this past Christmas. Over 30 gifts were purchased and delivered to the Salvation Army on December 11th along with 3 large garbage bags of handmade and purchased hats, gloves, mittens, scarves, and undergarments.

Thank you to everyone who so generously purchased gifts for those in need.

Christmas Gift Shop, A Huge Success

Throughout the month of December church members and friends had the opportunity to shop at the St. Paul UCC Gift shop following morning worship services. A variety of gift baskets and gifts were available for purchase. Approximately \$1,000 was raised for Christian Education programs and events. The shop was prepared and manned by Jane Dykowski and Peggy Staten. It was a wonderful and greatly appreciated opportunity for our members to shop stress free with the benefit of supporting the ministries of Christian Education. Thank you Peggy and Jane for all the hard work and heart that went into preparing and providing the "Christmas Gift Shop." You are so greatly appreciated!

Rock Hard in Faith Youth Happenings

Youth Winter Retreat / Ice Camp

January 19 – 21

Miracle Camp & Retreat Center

Where: 25281 80th Ave., Lawton MI

When: We will depart church at 5:30 p.m. Friday and return on Sunday around noon

Why: Worship, Fun & Fellowship

We 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 worship together with a live band. In addition there will be plenty of free time

Tube down the tubing hill Karaoke Play dodgeball

Try some broomball Snowshoe, Hit the game room

Sip coffee in the coffee shop Sit by the campfire

YOU MUST CONFIRM PARTICIPATION WITH 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 (734) 255-0935 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

Annual Congregational Meeting Scheduled

The annual meeting of the St. Paul congregation will be held on Sunday, January 21, 2024. In addition to reviewing reports on our ministry and programs over the past year, the congregation will be voting on a new budget and a slate of nominees for Council leadership. The annual meeting will follow our 10 a.m. worship service that morning. Church members should sign in at the narthex and pick up a copy of their annual report.

Tickets still available for St. Paul Fourteenth Annual Wild Game Dinner - January 27, 2024

The St. Paul Building and Grounds Ministry will be hosting its 14th Annual Wild Game Dinner on Saturday, January 27, 2024. Doors open at 5:30 pm, hors d'oeuvres at 6:00 pm and a sit-down dinner at 7:00 pm. It's a fun filled evening with raffles, good eating and great fellowship. Hors d'oeuvre items for the night will include wild chicken chili, salmon dip, sausage, turtle soup, cheese and crackers and fresh fruit. Entree items will include venison meatballs, Mexican venison lasagna, buffalo-carved, buffalo stir fry, BBQ wild boar, wild boar sausage w/green pepper and onions, along with potatoes and gravy and of course dessert. Tickets are \$45/each and can be purchased at the KIOSK table during Coffee Hour, by calling the Church office at (313) 291-1221 or by calling James Poet, Gary Staffeld, or Dan Case. This is always a **sell out event** so get your tickets early. We are also looking for donations that can be used for raffle items or door prizes.

Time to make the Coleslaw

It is time to make the coleslaw to be served at the 5 drive thru fish dinners that we will serve beginning on February 23, 2024. The brine will be made on February 9th and then on Saturday February 10th at 9:00 a.m. the vegetables, cabbage, peppers, etc. , that makes the coleslaw will be chopped. When all is ready the brine will be mixed with the chopped vegetables and put into 5 gallon buckets and stored in the refrigerators until needed.

This makes for a great time for fellowship and to show your skills in the kitchen. Please consider joining in the fun. Free Donuts and Coffee will be available for all who help.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

2023 Budget Update

Although the final numbers for 2023 will not be available until after December 31, 2023 I am anticipating that this year's budget will be well below what we had budgeted. I expect our budgeted income to be approximately \$75,000 under budget but I also expect our expense budget to be approximately \$45,000 under budget. We are spending approximately \$3,900 more that we take in each and every month. The final numbers will of course depend on December donations. I wish to thank each of you for your generous and continued contributions during the past year. I realize that this past year has not been easy on any of us. Investments are down and inflation drives up the cost of everyday living and we are all feeling the strain on our own expenses. Let's pray that 2024 is a much better year and that we hire a settled Sr. Pastor. I will present a detailed Treasurer's Report at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 21, 2024. Feel free to call me if you have additional questions or concerns regarding the 2023 budget. Dan Case - St Paul Treasurer

2024 Donation Envelopes

Donation envelopes for the first quarter of 2024 were mailed out in late December of 2023 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.

2023 Donation Statements

The 2023 donation statements will be mailed out to each household in mid January. If you have any questions regarding your 2023 statement please contact Annette Thie, Financial Secretary or Dan Case, Treasurer.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study Update

Tuesday morning bible study will resume January 9, 2024, 10:30 a.m. in the West Room. Any questions, please contact the church office at 313.291.1221.

Sew "N" Sew Gals to Meet

Thursday, January 18th 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.

HEALTH MINISTRIES

Exercise Class Resumes on Wednesday January 10, 2024

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.

Our Daily Bread Devotional Availability

If you are interested in reading Our 'Daily Bread', please contact the office. The editions are available in large print and regular print. Please specify the print type that you want. They come every three months. Kathy Williams can send a copy to you via US mail, or you may ask the usher to give you one from the narthex if they are available.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Lectors are needed for Sunday Services

If you would like to volunteer or would like more information please contact Cindy Romas in the church office. No experience needed. All information is provided to you.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Open Council Positions

Trustees, Fred Miller, Toni Hill and Marjie Barnard are looking for members of the congregation to volunteer for several important positions that have yet to be filled on Council. We are looking for a 2nd Vice President (3 year commitment), a Senior Deacon to replace someone who had to resign (1 year commitment) and a person to be a Deacon for a 3 year term. Also needed is someone to be an Elder for a 3 year term.

Those who have agreed to commit to other open positions are Tim Ruffner, 1st Vice President (2 year term), Fred Miller, Elder for 1 Year, Michael Isaacs, Trustee for 3 years.

If you are interested in filling any of the available positions please contact Fred, Toni or Marjie. A complete description of each of these positions are available through the church office.

The trustees would like to present the names of all those who are taking the open council positions during the Annual meeting January 21st.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

FACILITY IMPROVEMENT FUND:

In Memory of: *Elaine Cowper* From: Dan & Deborah Case

In Memory of: *Esther Perry* From: Dan & Deborah Case

MEMORIAL FUND:

In Memory of: *Loralee Wilson* From: Doug & Janet Staffeld

In Memory of: *Esther Diedrich-Perry* From: William Diedrich

TREE OF FAITH LEAF:

In Memory of: *Esther Diedrich-Perry* From: William Diedrich

WE ASK FOR YOUR PRAYERS FOR

Church Members and Friends: Judy Albright, Kyle Hard, Dan Newton, Bill Pattenau, Lois Rice, Shirley Robinson, Barbara Schultz, Gabriel Siadak, Sally Sigman, Joan Smarr, Sue Spears, Dianne Sturgeon, Linda Tank, Tom Williams.

Extended Family: Rhonda Wioncek Berndt, Ted Butkin, Marybeth Staffeld Gibbs (daughter, Roy & Mary), Sue Milatz, Debi and Al Petri, Jerry Rossi, Randy Snelson, Rachel Tank (Daughter, Tom & Linda Tank), Jane Zeuner (friend, Sandi Rose) and the Abdual Family (friends, Rosemarie Laslo).

Church Members & Friends in Extended Care or Rehab Care:

Darlene Babin, American House, 16333 Allen Rd., Room 213, Southgate, 48195; Dave Cowper, Michigan House Senior Living, 18533 Quarry Rd., Riverview, 48193; *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.