



Notes from the Pastor



As you read this newsletter, Thanksgiving Day will have come and gone. Hopefully your day was filled with family, food and wonderful fellowship. Although most of us did enjoy family and food, there are many who did not. Let us all remember in our prayers those in our families, community and around the world that may not have had a Thanksgiving as joyful as we may have had. Let us pray for those in our community who have no family or are estranged from their families; for those whose families are so far away that they cannot afford the cost to travel to them or do not have the time to get there. Let us pray for those in our community that may be in the military and are on duty somewhere around the globe. Also keep in your prayers all who are sick, home bound and who may have friends and loved ones that are incarcerated. But, most of all, let us look back at that day which is called Thanksgiving Day and let us be thankful for all that we do have. Let us be glad in our hearts and give thanks to God for this season and thank Him each and every day.

Today let us look to the future; the Advent season is here! This is a season of hope as we look forward with anticipation to celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ, one more time. It is a good thing that during this season we remember what this event truly means; to us personally and as a church. Unfortunately much of the Christ in CHRISTmas gets lost this time of year as the secular world runs over us with shopping ads, Rudolph the reindeer and Santa Claus. Yet if we look, there are many signs in this season that still point to Christ. There are the evergreen Christmas trees with their needles that stay green all year long which the ancients felt signified the eternal spirit of God and His son Jesus. We see the stars up in the night sky and human made stars hung high on roof tops, on the sides of barns and even on top of silos and grain bins. They all can represent the star of the East which the wise men followed to find the baby Jesus. We see Nativity scenes scattered around town in front of churches and in the windows of houses and department stores. All these things and many more are there for us to see and to remind us of why and who we celebrate at this time of the year.

There are countless things related to the Advent Season I would love to reminisce about in this newsletter. But I will speak about what I think is the most important thing we all should focus on this Advent Season. This month I would like to remind everyone that this is the season of Heavenly Love. Love of the Father and how He sent His son into this imperfect world to be our Lord and Savior. This is the beginning of the life of Jesus who at the end of His life here on earth, gave himself up freely to be crucified so that we could be saved from sin. This is a time of year when we all need to remember our loved ones; family and friends. We need to remember those who are near to us and those who are far away, either by distance of miles or distance by estrangement of the heart and soul. Whenever I think of love, especially this time of year, I always think about what the Apostle Paul said in

Romans 12:9-18. *Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.*

So enjoy this season of anticipation of the birth of our Lord and Savior and have a Blessed and Merry Christmas and a Very Happy New Year!

Pastor Allen

Lay Leader Notes By Cindy Morse

. Greetings to my St. Paul church family----



I want to share with you this Advent season some thoughts about Joseph, Jesus' earthly father, not much is recorded or written in the Bible about Joseph. What I will be sharing with you comes from a book written by Max Lucado, entitled "Cast of Characters, common people in the Hands of an Uncommon God."

The birth of Christ stirs so many questions, characters appear and disappear before we can ask them anything, an example; the innkeeper, too busy to welcome God--- did he ever learn who he turned away? The shepherds- did they ever hum the song the angels sang? The wise men who followed the star- what was it like to worship a toddler? And Joseph, especially Joseph, I've got questions for Joseph. Haven't you ever wondered about any of these questions?

We don't know what happened to Joseph. His role was so crucial that we expect to see him during the rest of Jesus' life. He never appears after a scene with the twelve year old Jesus in Jerusalem, his life is left in speculation.

When Joseph begins, speaking to God he might have commented "This isn't the way I planned it. My child is being born in a stable". Joseph probably imagined family and friends around him. Did I miss something? Did I God? You sent an angel to speak to me, I envisioned my child being born in Jerusalem or perhaps Nazareth. This is not the way I wanted my son.... Oh, I did it again, didn't I Father? It's just that I forgot. He's not my son... he's Yours.

Mary is giving birth not to a child, but to the Messiah, God. Surely you can understand; it's not easy, so, so, bizarre.

God, I'm a carpenter, but this time I'm not the builder, this time I'm a tool. A hammer in your grip, a nail between your fingers. This project is yours, not mine.

One final thing father, the angel you sent. Any chance you could send another? If not an angel maybe a person? Joseph felt very alone. We all know of a time when we have search the night for light. We have all asked our questions. The Bethlehem sky is not the first to hear the pleadings of a confused pilgrim.

Joseph was obedient he obeyed when the angels called, he was obedient, he packed his family to another country.

Does God care? Do we matter to God? Does He still love his children? Through the small face of the stable born baby, he says YES!!

Yes, your sins are forgiven.

Yes, your name is written in heaven.

And yes, God has ente3rd your world.

Immanuel, God is with us.

Have a blessed Advent season.



Outreach Opportunities

Hopefully,

The many people that our giving has helped this past year had a Blessed Thanksgiving. Thank you for sharing your blessing throughout the year.

During the Advent and Christmas season we will be having special giving's to three mission projects:

- ⇒ **locally to KNWS, Christmas radio 101.9** The station manager writes, "I love that God allows us to share His hope and love through music and encouraging messages every single day. If you're not already listening, let me invite you to tune in!"
- ⇒ **statewide to Bidwell-Riverside in Des Moines** They write, "Bidwell's Food and Clothing Pantry, the largest serving food pantry in the state of Iowa, provides our neighbors in need with food, clothing personal and household items and perhaps most importantly kindness and compassion."
- ⇒ **in Malawi**, our friend Kelly N. writes, "Yesterday I slept at the gas station waiting to buy fuel... We are having a lot of young people committing suicide because of economic hardship... You are on your own. We depend on family and friends for survival in case you encounter hardship." We will send help to his church to be used for their most urgent needs.



Also, we will be having our Giving Tree for children in our community. Take a tag from the tree, sign the sheet, spend around \$30, wrap the gift, put the tag on, and return it to the library by Sunday, December 18.

Thank you to all who have shared your Nativity Sets for the Home for the Holidays tour on Sunday, December 4 from 5-7 p.m. There are five sites to tour with a cost of \$10. this fundraiser helps the Women's Clup help the community.



Christmas Choir

All who enjoy singing, please join us for practice on Sunday, Dec. 11, at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

We will be singing during the worship service on Sunday, December 18, and during the Christmas Eve service on Dec. 24 at 7:00.

FINANCE Update

October 30	\$2,510.59
November 6	\$2,435.00
November 13	\$1,686.00
November 20	\$7,242.95
November 27	\$1814.00



Remember - For your giving to be on your 2022 statement, please have your contributions here by Wednesday, December 28th

Finance Committee

Thank you for faithfully tithing to our church!



WOMEN UNITED IN FAITH DECEMBER 2022



Are you ready? Will you be ready?

These are the questions we should be asking ourselves as the Wonderful Season of Advent begins. Each year starting this time we have the opportunity of examining our lives and our hearts as we prepare to welcome the Baby Jesus on Christmas morning. November 27, we lighted our first Advent Candle during our church service and will continue to light an Advent Candle each Sunday morning until Christmas Day. As we light these candles and sing our beautiful Christmas Carols, we will share the wonderful Christmas Story together.

Join us December 10th at 9:00 a.m. for our Christmas Brunch. We will be joining together for Christmas Fellowship with songs, food, and laughter. We will be presenting two "Special Mission Recognition Awards". Invite a friend and come for a great morning.

December 11 will be the Children's Christmas Program during church. They will be sharing "The Amazing Story of Jesus."

This month I am sharing Helen Steiner Rice's poem "The Christmas Tree."
Listen...be quiet... Perhaps you can hear the Christmas Tree speaking... soft and clear:
I am God's messenger of love and in Christmas dress, I come to light your heart and home with joy and happiness.

I bring you pretty packages and longed-for gifts of love, but most of all I bring you a message from above—

The message Christmas angels sang on that first night When Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, became this dark world's light.

For though I'm tinsel laden and beautiful to see, Remember, I am much, much more than just a glittering tree, more than a decoration to enhance the Christmas scene, I am a living symbol that God's love is evergreen, and when Christmas Day is over and the holidays are through, may the joyous spirit of Christmas abide all year with you.

So have a Merry Christmas in the Blessed Savior's name and thank Him for the priceless gifts that are ours because He came.

NEW CHRISTMAS TRADITION

December 1st read one chapter of the Book of Luke in the Bible. There are 24 chapters. Then read one chapter each day.

ON CHRISTMAS EVE YOU WILL HAVE READ AN ENTIRE ACCOUNT OF JESUS' LIFE. YOU WILL WAKE UP CHRISTMAS MORNING KNOWING WHO AND WHY WE CELEBRATE!

*Blessing to you and loved ones as we await the birth of our
Savior, Jesus Christ.*



Education News For December



The AMAZING Story of Christmas

Our Children's Christmas Program will be on Sunday, December 11th, during the 10:00 a.m. church service! Come and share the good news through the kids' songs and script!

“So now at Christmas we all take delight. In the gift that God gave us that first Christmas night.”

Help us celebrate the Greatest gift of Christmas...Jesus!



For the parents of our Sunday School (pre-school through fifth grade) kids, **Sunday School will be starting at 8:30 on Dec. 4th and Dec. 11th!**

Thank you for your help in making the Christmas program happen!

Calendar News:

December 4th, 11th

December 18th

December 25th and January 1st

Sunday School classes at 8:30 a.m.

Sunday School classes at 8:45 a.m.

NO Sunday School classes (winter break)



Special Thank You!



To everyone who helped with the remembrance of Pastor Appreciation Day, I gratefully say, Thanks to all of you! It is nice to know that others appreciate what I do here at St. Paul UMC.

God Bless, and again Thank You!

Pastor Allen



December 2022



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Finance Meeting	2	3
4 Son Chimes Play	5 Bible Study @ 1:30 p.m. Shawl Ministry @ 7:00 p.m.	6 Worship - 9 a.m.	7 Chimes @ 4:15 Confirmation @ 6:00 p.m. Jubilation @ 7:00 p.m. Education @ 7:00 p.m.	8	9	10 Christmas Brunch 9:00 a.m.
11 Christmas Program @ 10 a.m. Christmas Choir Practice @ 9:00	12 Bible Study @ 1:30 p.m. Shawl Ministry @ 7:00 p.m.	13 Trustees @ 5:30 Ad Council @ 6:30	14 Chimes @ 4:15 Nursing Center Confirmation @ 6:00 p.m. Jubilation @ 7:00 p.m.	15	16	17
18 Christmas Choir Practice @ 9:00	19 Bible Study @ 1:30 p.m. Shawl Ministry @ 7:00 p.m.	20	21 Joy Circle @ 9:00 a.m. Chimes @ 4:15 Confirmation @ 6:00 p.m. Praise Service @ 7:00 p.m.	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Service @ 7:00 p.m. Christmas Choir @ 7:00 p.m.
25 	26 Bible Study @ 1:30 p.m. Shawl Ministry @ 7:00 p.m.	27 Meekness Circle @ 7:00 p.m.	28 Confirmation Class @ 6:00 Jubilation @ 7:00 p.m.	29	30	31
						

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St. Paul United Methodist Church
501 Sycamore St. Box 187
La Porte City, IA 50651



Notes From the Office

Look for:

Updated church information

Sunday Services on our Facebook page, Website and YouTube.

Sunday School 8:45 a.m. Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

Traditional Music 1st, 4th & 5th Sundays Praise Music 2nd & 3rd Sundays

Please join us for worship here at:
St. Paul United Methodist Church - La Porte City, Iowa

Office Hours
9:00 AM -12:30 PM Tuesday - Thursday

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