

## NEW YEAR, NEW DREAMS, NEW VISION

The year 2024 has seen countless gun shootings and bombs flying in war-torn countries. One gunner in the Ukraine-Russia Conflict said that you can never have too many bombs. As wars drag on, the weapons become more sophisticated. Drones and Missiles have become a common word in the daily news. The words World War 3 and nuclear weapons have also been floating all over the internet. According to the Arms Control Association, the world has a total of 14,500 nuclear weapons. All of which are in the Northern Hemisphere. What could be the possibility that these weapons will never be used and will be disposed of? On the other hand, could it be that the Arms Race is now on the way?

Another newsmaker that requires attention is the rise of Refugees in war-torn regions. So many people are displaced from their homes and starving. There is never too much Aid for the refugees.

As the New Year 2025 comes, what goals are you thinking of? What are you praying for? What cause would you like to be a part of?

Personal hopes for individual prosperity are the common prayer item for the New Year. We must add in our prayer that the Spirit of God helps the Northern Hemisphere of the earth to prevent any mistake of starting a Nuclear War. Summertime can be very hot due to the Global Warming of countless motors and factories burning fuel each day. How much more heat could there be when nuclear weapons are detonated? Nobody can say that he/she will never be affected because we will all breathe the same air.

Thoughts like these should raise everyone's concerns and goals. What more appropriate time to foresee visions than now? We, as the United Methodist Church are to think globally and act locally. Prayers are much needed. The Refugees need more food and medicine. Prayers should be accompanied by actions and engagements in programs that can feed the world. Farmers are the silent heroes of the world. This makes me glad that I am serving in Iowa where farming technology is bound to produce more agricultural products.

Of all the success of a good country, feeding people is the direction of Christ Jesus right after he died and rose to life. Jesus was looking for someone to befriend and he found Peter and asked him, "Peter, do you love me? Feed my sheep. Feed my lamb." Christ started the church with various concepts of feeding each other. He gave his life and instituted his ministry through the regular breaking and sharing of bread. Christ talked about preparing a grand banquet and inviting the poor people to the streets. Christ went about feeding people by the thousands while preaching.

One thing nobody thinks of for New Year's Resolution is making provisions for an eventual death. The book of Stephen Covey, *Seven Habits of Highly Successful People*, names the funeral as one important factor. We must ask what we want to hear during our funeral. I myself, wish to hear Jesus say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." I resolve every New Year that I will strive to be so. We already know that we can expect these words because that has been the deal that Christ gave his servants. For everyone, Christ wants to say, "Come enter heaven. I was hungry, you gave me food, I was thirsty you gave me a drink."

As we pray for Peace on Earth and Goodwill to all men in 2025, let us find ways to produce more food and provide for the hungry and thirsty in our world. You may be a silent hero on earth, but you will be cheered on by the angels and the saints in heaven. May you have a Heavenly New Year. Amen.

**REV. DR. MOODY & PASTOR EMELYN COLORADO**

# Pay Leader Notes

By Cindy Morse

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

**Always be mindful of kindness and goodness, 1st Thessalonians 5:15 tells us this: Make sure nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and everyone else.**

**What does it mean to do the right thing? We all likely know someone who will occasionally do a good deed for you, but you wouldn't describe this person as a kind person. Think about this saying " What a nice thing for you to do" versus " You are such a kind person". Biblical kindness/ goodness is a result of an intentional Christian lifestyle. A person whose nature is good will be kind. A kind person will be a good person.**

**Let's consider Jesus' words to a rich man who asked this question about what good thing the man needed to do to gain eternal life. " Why do you ask me about what is good? " There is only one who is good. If you want eternal life, keep the commandments". (Matt. 19:17).**

**Scriptures about kindness and Goodness:**

**Romans 12:19-21 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay says the Lord". Now if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will hear burning coals on their heads". Do not overcome evil but overcome evil with good.**

**Galatians 5:22-23 tells us: By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.**

**Let's all begin this new year 2025 with all the adjectives written in the Galatians scripture.**

**Have a blessed new year.**



## Outreach Opportunities

Thank you to the congregation for donating over \$20,000 worth of items or cash that went towards local, state, national, and international needs.

May God bless you as you bless others.

## Finance Update

Nov. 26	\$5975.73
Dec. 01	\$8165.00
Dec. 08	\$1550.00

*Generosity*  
changes everything

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## **Soup Lunch**

Join Meekness Circle for their annual Soup Lunch on Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup> after worship. The menu is chicken noodle, chili, and potato soups with relishes and bars.



**Freewill offering**  
*Take homes will be available.*



## *United Women in Faith 2025*



# January

A huge thank you to everyone who helped with our Community Christmas Tea. A very special thank you to Bob Hanson who told everyone the Wonderful Christmas Story From The Scriptures. Very special thanks also to all of our wonderful entertainment and our friends from American Lutheran Church, Heartland Community Church, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, and our own St. Paul United Methodist Church who put this wonderful evening together.

Our Children's Christmas Program was great. So much fun to see all the children helping to get all of us in the True Christmas Spirit. Thank you to all of the Sunday School Teachers for all their work. Thanks also to all the parents for bringing their children to the practices.

January 26 is the date of the Meekness Circle Soup Luncheon after church service. Be sure and come for a very tasty lunch.

As we start a NEW YEAR it is a good time to reflect on the past, and take a look at one's Christian Walk, and consider the direction God may want to lead each of us in the coming days. Set aside some time to pause and evaluate your spiritual walk, as you seek God's presence. I am sharing a poem to help you get started.

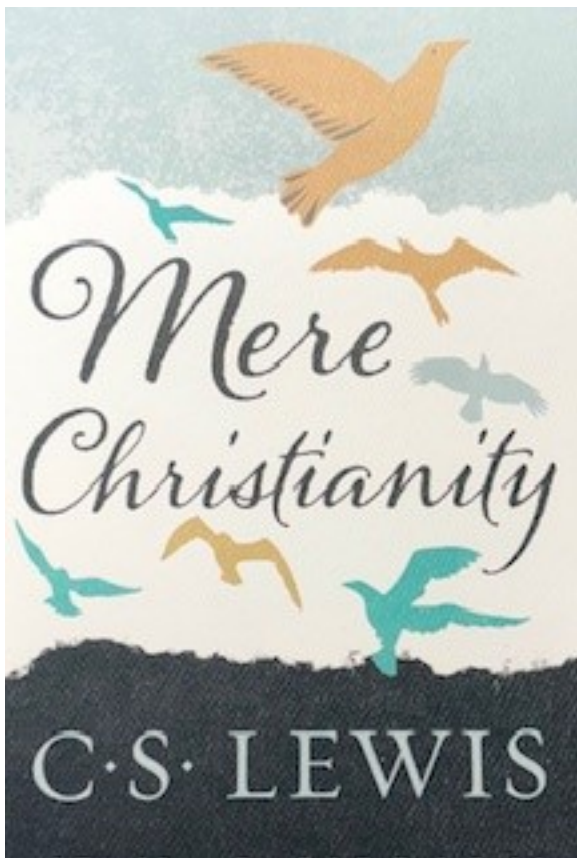
How can I use the New Year to better serve my Lord? I'll read my Bible every day, and be more in accord.  
I'll find new ways to serve others; I'll love my neighbor, too. I'll focus on "give" instead of "get" in everything I do.  
I'll forgive people I'm mad at; angry feelings I'll discard; I'll try to love my enemies, even though it's hard.  
In the New Year, I'll lift people up, instead of putting them down. I'll fill my heart with love and joy, and never wear a frown. I'll let go of my worries; and put it all in His hands; I'll repent and try to sin less, and obey all of His commands.  
These New Year resolutions are difficult, at best. Yet, here's what I can do each day that will put my soul at rest:  
I'll love my Lord with all my heart, with all my mind and soul; If I do that essential thing, I'll leave the rest in His control. Anonymous

Our Bible Verse for January is found in Psalm 51:10.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

Welcome to 2025, with God's help, let's make it a wonderful year. Blessings to you and your loved ones.  
Pat and Charlene

# New in the Library



## *The Beloved Classic on What All Christians Believe*

“Lewis seeks in *Mere Christianity* to help us see religion with fresh eyes, as a radical faith whose adherents might be likened to an underground group gathering in a war zone, a place where evil seems to have the upper hand, to hear messages of hope from the other side.”

-Kathleen Norris, from the Forward

The book brings together C.S. Lewis’s legendary broadcast talks of the war years, talks in which he set out simply to “explain and defend the belief that has been common to nearly all Christians at all times.”



# *Education News*

## “Star of Wonder”

### Children’s Musical, 2024

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” Luke 2:14



Super Star	Miya Nielsen
Moon	Owen Frederiksen
Lucky Star	Ella Opperman
North Star	Alayna Opperman
Rock Star	Hayden Foulk
Falling Star	Audrey Nielsen
Shooting Stars	Emily and Eleanor Medina
Angels (and Three Kings)	Savanna Long, Cora Frederiksen, Clara Opperman
Shepherds	Logan Foulk and Kolton Long
Mary	Annie Parson
Joseph	Jace Bechthold

## *Education News*



(Cora Frederiksen and Clara Opperman)

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**  
**Sunday School classes will resume on January 5<sup>th</sup>.**



## **2024 Summary from the Trustee Committee**

**2024 was another busy year. Here is a brief recap of projects that were completed, or are currently in process.**

The remodeling of all the church bathrooms was completed early in the year. What a difference!!! If you haven't checked them out yet, you need to!

The Sanctuary ceiling had areas that were stained. These were painted and light fixtures were cleaned.

Our annual 'deep cleaning' of the church was done by a group of volunteers. Everything just seems to have that clean, fresh look and feel once this is done. We work once a week in February and March, and are always looking for more volunteers, so don't hesitate to let us know if you would like to help.

Door stoppers were added to the parking lot door and also the new exterior door by the Sanctuary. These really helps with loading and unloading items at the church.

Outside we lost one bush – a willow, which was replaced. Bushes around the church were watered and weeded during the summer, and bushes that need additional trimming will be done in the spring. Weeds in the parking lot were also sprayed multiple times.

The outside cement steps by the front of the Sanctuary and the 1-way street entrance were both replaced and/or repaired. We are still waiting for new railings to be delivered for these steps.

Two new 'St. Paul United Methodist' signs were installed on the outside of the church this summer.

In 2023 two trees had to be removed from the backyard of the parsonage. In 2024 new trees and landscaping were added, making a big improvement to the yard.

Also at the parsonage the water heater needed to be replaced and also a new thermostat was installed. The driveway and some areas of the sidewalk needed to be raised, and that repair was also done.

We greatly appreciate all the volunteers that have helped with projects throughout the year. Volunteer labor makes it possible to spread the dollars further to other needed projects.

The church continues to have multiple projects that need attention, some of these include repairs to the parking lot and Sunday school rooms, replacing worn-out carpet, a new storage shed, and new chairs for the Chapel and Fellowship Hall. These projects can only be done with your continued financial support and volunteer help.

May God Bless you and your family in the coming New Year,

The Trustee Committee

Wayne Gaston, Sherry Sheffler, Michelle Henson, Shawn Sheffler, Judy Hora





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Jubilation @ 6:30 p.m.  Education @ 7:00 p.m.	2	3	4
5 Sunday School Worship @ 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion	6  Bible Study @ 1:30 p.m.	7 Worship @ 9:00 a.m. Shawl Ministry @ 2:00 p.m. SPRC @ 4:30 p.m.	8  Jubilation @ 6:30 pm	9	10	11
12 Outreach @ 9:15 a.m.  Worship @ 10:00 a.m.	13  Bible Study @ 1:30 p.m.	14 Finance -10 Shawl Ministry @ 2:00 p.m. Trustees @ 5:30 p.m. AD Council @ 6:30 p.m.	15 Joy Circle @ 9:00 a.m.  Jubilation @ 6:30 pm	16	17	18
19  Worship @ 10:00 a.m.	20  Bible Study @ 1:30 p.m.	21 Shawl Ministry @ 2:00 p.m. Meekness Circle @ 7:00 p.m.	22 Chimes @ 4:15 p.m.  Jubilation @ 6:30 p.m.	23 Pastor's return from the Philippines	24	25
26 Worship @ 10:00 a.m. Meekness Soup Lunch @ 11:15 a.m.	27  Bible Study @ 1:30 p.m.	28  Shawl Ministry @ 2:00 p.m.	29 Chimes @ 4:15 p.m. Confirmation @ 6:15 p.m. Jubilation @ 6:30 p.m.	30	31	

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 Website: [www.lpcsaaintpaulumc.org](http://www.lpcsaaintpaulumc.org) ~ Facebook: LPC St. Paul UMC  
 Pastor Allen Craft ~ Email: [revac1955@gmail.com](mailto:revac1955@gmail.com) ~ Cell phone: 319-231-5213

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 am**

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

**We look forward to seeing you!**

**St. Paul United Methodist Church**

La Porte City, Iowa

### **Office Hours**

Pastor: Emelyn S. Castillo-Colorado

Pastor hours: Monday–noon & Tuesday-Thursday –9:30 a.m. (or schedule an appointment.)

Email: [emvalsancas5466@gmail.com](mailto:emvalsancas5466@gmail.com)

Emelyn - Cell phone: 319-559-7387

Phone: 319-342-2208 - Church

Office hours: Wednesday & Thursday 8:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

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