

Greetings everyone!

I want to make this newsletter, the first one for 2021, a positive and encouraging letter that is full of hope for a future that will be filled with the love, peace, and grace of our Lord Jesus. I know that we all have had a very trying year in 2020. With the covid-19 pandemic turning our world and our very lives up-side down it has been hard to get back to a normal, or at least what seems like a normal, sense of rhythm that we used to enjoy. I could go on-and-on about all the things that we have had to change, give up, make do with, go without and be forced to do (like wearing masks) so that we can personally be safe and that we can help make the world a little safer for others. BUT, enough of all that!

When I first came back to La Porte City and became your pastor here at St. Paul United Methodist Church, I had these great plans to start new bible studies, prayer groups, fine tune what was already a great worship experience on Sunday mornings and get out and visit everyone of you and just be your pastor. Hah! Boy, did all those plans fall flat on their faces! I still want to do all those things, unfortunately, I can see that with the world and our lives turned up-side down it will take a little longer to start some things and to put other plans into motion.

I want to thank everyone for their thoughts, prayers, cards and gifts of time, effort and money to memorials as I, Joyce and my family grieve over the loss of my Mom and Dad. A major part of my personal up-sidedownness comes from this grief and now dealing with family affairs and making plans for a new future that is hard to imagine, let alone make preparations for.

As we all look toward the future, remember, the Christmas season and the hope in the fact that Jesus has come into this world, He was born as a human, He lived and experienced ALL that we have or will ever face in our lifetimes. Jesus then went on to die for us so that we all can be saved. There is nothing in this world, or in the next, that can overcome the love of Jesus who is the Christ, the messiah our savior. Let us all keep that "Glad Tiding" dear to our hearts as we begin a New Year.

Pastor Allen



December Review

Dec. 6	\$6,200.00
Dec. 13	\$2,950.00
Dec. 20	\$3,112.80
Dec. 27	\$2,226.00



Thank you for your faithfulness in giving to our church programs. Our God doesn't need our money, but as we develop generous hearts it opens His blessings to us more and more.

Thoughts from our Lay Leader, Cindy Morse

Greetings once again--- If you are sitting and reading this portion of the January 2021 newsletter, stop and let's all take a collective deep breathe, and let it go!! 2020 is GONE, GONE, GONE we can say good bye to many negative happenings, and focus on better things to come!!

In Isaiah 55: 6-7, 12 it tells us-- To seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near, let the wicked forsake their way and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall sing into song, and all the trees clap their hands.

All nature joins in manifestations of joy and renewal as the exiles find their way home. Showing fruitfulness to God's amazing grace.

For this coming year in Proverbs 3:5-8 it tells us. " Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and turn away from evil. It will be a healing for your flesh and refreshment for your body.

Let's all continue to stay safe, be strong, and keep the faith.
Happy New Year !!!!



Thank You!

To the St. Paul Methodist Church Family.

Thank you for the wonderful Christmas card and the VERY generous gift of money. Joyce and I greatly appreciate your thoughtfulness and your prayers as we go through this Christmas season. This year has been especially trying for Joyce and I, as well as my extended family, due to the passing of both my parents. With the coming of the new year, may the love of God, the mercy of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

Many Blessings

Allen and Joyce



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Welcome to the year 2021! We've come a long way since the scare of 2000! Having just celebrated the birthday of Jesus, our hearts are full of love and hope to make 2021 the best year ever. Let's use that love and hope and share it with everyone. Each day God gives us the opportunity for a fresh start and the ability to make not only our day great but to share with someone else and perhaps make their day a little better also. During this time when we can't get together we can continue to keep in touch with each other by telephone, Facebook, or letter. Perhaps you can call a different person each day. Did any of you take the challenge to read the Book of Luke during December? For me it helped to be more connected to Jesus as I read about his life. It also helped me to feel connected to our church because it seemed like a Bible Study. I'm thinking I will try to continue reading a chapter a day in the Bible and will begin with Matthew. I'll challenge you to do the same. This month I have a couple of New Year readings I would like to share with you. The first one is "A NEW YEAR WITH THE LORD." This was written by M.S. Lowndes.

A new year is about to unfold with new opportunities to explore. Doors will open for new experiences, New adventures with the Lord.

Remember not the former things, The Lord will do new things in us, Much more that we are aware. For He will make a way for us as we put our trust in Him. And He will guide our every step By His presence we have within. What God has placed within our hearts, We find we'll be able to do, if we look for the opportunities, we'll see the door to go through. We mustn't let anything hold us back but rise up and take our place, and be all that God wants us to be with a fresh touch of His Grace. The second reading was "A RECIPE FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR" written by Deborah Ann. Take a cup of Forgiveness, stir in some of God's grace then fold it into your heart and this recipe you'll embrace. But you'll need to keep adding more ingredients as you go if you plan on having a year where Love can rise and grow. You're going to need Patience, at least a cup or two.... If you want to have Meekness bubbling up inside of you. You'll need to slowly blend in, a heaping spoonful of Goodness then beat it into the mixture so you can whip up Gentleness. Don't forget to add a pinch of Joy, and as you whisk it into Peace add a dollop of Faith and Trust and Hope you will release. If you live in the Spirit, you'll need to walk in it too..... and if you follow this recipe it'll produce His fruit in you!

Our Bible Verses were recommended for anytime you need to be reminded how much God loves each of us.

Psalm 91:4 "He will cover you with his feathers and under his wings you will find refuge, His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart."

Deuteronomy 33:27 "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. He will drive out your enemy before you, saying "Destroy him?"

Psalm 34:7 "The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them." Philippians 4:7 "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Blessings to all of you as we enter a new Year with the Hope of a Vaccine that can help us see a light at the end of the tunnel. Remember to let your light shine so everyone can see Christ's love shining through you.

Pat and Charlene



Outreach Opportunities

In Luke 14:12-14, Jesus teaches, "When you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, because they cannot 'pay you back.' But God has a plan to 'pay you back.' Read Psalm 41 and discover the seven blessings God pours out on those who remember the poor.

Our congregation is so generous in giving hope and comfort to others. During the Christmas season:

- We gave a box of fruit and many cards to the nursing home
- Gifts to 16 kids so they would have a Merry Christmas
- Boxes of food to 14 families
- We will send over \$1100 each to:
KNWS AM 1090. FM 101.9
Hospitality House in Waterloo
Henderson Settlement in Appalachia
- We will send \$400 to the Christian ministry, Love. A Child, in Haiti. This will provide 10,800 meals to the people who are literally eating from the garbage dumps and often starving to death.



Please continue to keep in touch with our church family as we continue to live social distancing. We can feel we are a community as we each read The Upper Room devotional. These writings are organized months earlier; yet they seem to speak to our times many days.

May God bless you as you bless others.

Thank You's

- ♦ We would like to thank our church family for the sympathy shown to us by your calls, texts, cards, food items and monetary gifts in memory of our parents, Duane and Joanne Craft.
Duane passed on November 23rd and Joanne passed on December 9th. They are together once again and healed of all sickness. They rest now in the loving arms of Jesus.

With love and gratitude,

Pastor Allen & Joyce and all the Craft Families

May the New Year, 2021, be a year of healing for all who have been sick and hurting; for those who have had tragedy in their lives.

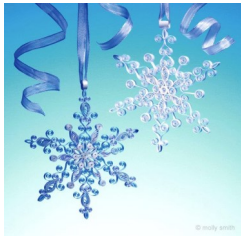
May we all show more love to everyone we meet and only speak positive thoughts.

We have a beautiful world created for us by our God. Each day is a gift to be thankful for. Praise God always!

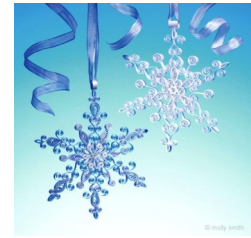
- ♦ Thank you for remembering me during the Christmas season with cards, gifts, gift cards and monetary gifts from the UMW and St. Paul UMC. It is a pleasure to work in the office!

Have a Blessed New Year in 2021!!

Carolyn



January 2021



Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3	4	5	6	7	1/8	2/9
10 Livestream Worship Service 10 am Doors are open!	11	12 Trustees Mtg. 5:30 pm Council Mtg. 6:30 pm	13	14	15	16
17 Livestream Worship Service 10 am Doors are open!	18	19 Newsletter Articles due!!	20	21	22	23
24 Livestream Worship Service 10 am Doors are open!	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 Livestream Worship Service 10 am Doors are open!						

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



Pastor Allen Craft
Email: revac1955@gmail.com
Cell phone: 319-231-5213
Phone: 319-342-2208 -Church
email: lpcumchurch@gmail.com
Website: www.lpcsaintpaulumc.org
Facebook: LPC St. Paul UMC
Office Hours Tue. & Thur. 9:00 –
12:30 or by appointment

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Look for:

Updated church information

Sunday Services on our Facebook page, Website and YouTube.

Worship Service 10:00 am

Livestream & Doors open at 10:00

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La Porte City, IA 50651

Office Hours

9:00—12:30 Tuesday & Thursday and by appointment

Office Phone ~ 319-342-2208

Pastor Allen Craft ~ 319-231-5213

Carolyn ~ 319-415-1857

Email: lpcumchurch@gmail.com

Pastor Allen's email address: revac1955@gmail.com

Website: www.lpcsaintpaulumc.org

Facebook: LPC St. Paul UMC