



THE STEEPLE

A Publication of St. Paul United Methodist Church
of Rosewood Heights, Illinois



DECEMBER 2014

Every year, I watch Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. Currently on my DVR, I have the version with George C. Scott as Scrooge. My favorite. And, every few years I reread the classic story.

My favorite line in the book appears near the end where a transformed Ebenezer Scrooge vows: *"I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year."*

Most of us share this sentiment without the visitations of the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future. Christmas carols seem too beautiful to be sung only during this brief season. Christmas trees too lovely to be taken down on New Year's Day. Christmas love too needed to be discarded after the Yuletide.

Although we attempt to keep the spirit of Christmas burning brightly within us, life has a way of dimming its glow. Come July we desperately need another infusion of Christmas spirit.

While Dickens does not explicitly say it, we honor Christmas by honoring the Christ child every day. Jesus is literally the embodiment of Christmas. God come to us. God with us.

The name of the baby, *Jesus*, means *"God saves."* Once more, God has acted to save us. When Jesus touches our lives, our sins are stripped from us, our hearts are renewed, and we are set free at last! Free to live the life God intends for us: Jesus' life.

*In Ebenezer Scrooge, Charles Dickens has created a character who is so very much like all of us. I think that is why the character is so enduring. The question posed by Dickens is **which scrooge shall we be? The miserly scrooge at the beginning of the story or the transformed scrooge at its ending?***

The longer I live the more I learn that there is no success except from following Jesus' way, no beauty without Jesus' presence, no power except the power of Jesus' love and no peace except the peace Jesus brings.

Here is the truth spoken so long ago by the prophet Isaiah:

FOR A CHILD HAS BEEN BORN FOR US, A SON GIVEN TO US; AUTHORITY RESTS UPON HIS SHOULDERS; AND HE IS NAMED WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE.

Long after the manger scene has been packed in its box and stored in the closet...long after the last of the pine needles has been swept out of the living room carpet...long after the last of the Christmas toys has been broken and tossed into the trash...the baby remains. And, wherever the baby abides--in church, in home, in heart-- lives Christmas all the year.

Charles Dickens ends his story by writing: *"It was always said of Scrooge, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge."*

May the same be said of each of us. And so, as Tiny Tim says throughout the story: **"GOD BLESS US, EVERY ONE!"** Merry Christmas! Pastor Daryl





OUR CHURCH FAMILY & THANK YOU'S!

- Thank you to Marilyn Cisler & the Hand Bell Choir, Eldon Wold Jr. & the Worship Choir, and Debbie Bacus & the Children's Choir (**and to Kevin Rader & Meg Fansler whose names we missed last month**) for the special music during our one worship service on Oct. 19th. The music added so much to our time of praise.
- Our prayers and deepest sympathy goes to those who have lost loved ones recently. To the family of **David Whipple**, friend of Susie Pruetzel; the family of **Tom Crain**, brother/brother-in-law of Bill & Ronda Crain; the family of **Mike Richter**, father-in-law of the Fansler's niece; the family of **Rosemary Roberts**, mother of Craig Roberts - friend of the Fanslers and others; and the family of **Andrew "Andy" Batchelor**, good friend of Lois Mitchell & Ruth Bell. May God give you all comfort and grace in this time of grieving.
- Congratulations to our sixth graders who received their Bibles this year: **Madelyn Adams, Lizzie Dawson, Lauryn Decker, Autumn Franks, Logan Scroggins**. May you learn and grow in the Lord as you read your Bible.
- We **thank the Worship Ministry Team** for decorating the church so beautifully for Christmas. Your efforts have enhanced our celebration of this holy season.
- **Thank you to all who helped** make our Parents Night Out event a big success! We are pleased that we can help out busy parents at this time of the year by taking care of their children for the evening!
- Congratulations to **Leah Emerick & Keith Butler** who were united in marriage at St. Paul on Nov. 8. Leah is the daughter of Dana & Micki Emerick and granddaughter of Patsy Goss. Our prayer is that their home will always be a place of peace with Christ at its center.
- **Oliver Bacus and Sydney Martin** were onstage in the Roxana High School production of *The Curious Savage* by John Patrick. **Brendan Palmer** was the stage manager. **Debbie & Mark Bacus** directed the play. Mark Bacus designed the set while Spencer Bacus helped paint it. Mrs. Birdine Groshong, a former member of our congregation, directed the same play back in November 1966 at Roxana High School. The garden alongside the church park was planted in her memory.
- **Thank you to those helping with our Awakening Preview Services** as we move toward the Jan. 10th Launch Service. Many hours of planning and practice have gone into these services. We welcome your feedback as we craft services to better connect people with Jesus Christ.
- **Congratulations to Matt Herndon** as he and his family traveled to Chicago to receive his Illinois Association of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, "Middle School Teacher of the Year" Award for the State of Illinois for 2013-2014. He also received an award as the Top Southwest Illinois Middle School Teacher at the same time!

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- **Thank You:** Thank you to our church family for your support during the loss of my Mother, Lois Long. We greatly appreciated all the prayers, cards, and those who came to the visitation.
Sandy Scroggins & Family
 - **Thank You:** Thank you so much to my church family for taking such good care of us in this sad time. Your cards, prayers, and calls have been a great help to me in these days after Kyle Trimm's passing. I have the best church family; words cannot describe what you mean to me. God bless you!
Mildred Ballard & her family



**God Owns the Cattle;
We Manage the Rangel**



*"I am God, your God: even the cattle on a
thousand hills is mine."*

~Psalm 50:10

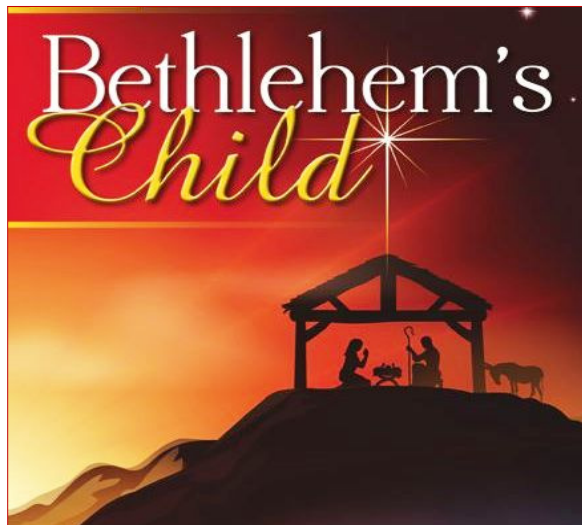
REPORT ON

**"God Owns the Cattle; We Manage the Rangel"
COMMITMENT SUNDAY**

There is still time to return your Estimate of Giving card. If you misplaced your card, stop by the Church Office or the plastic pockets on the wall in the entryway for a replacement. Your estimate is important as we develop a budget for 2015.

- A total of **85** individuals, couples, and families have completed *Estimate of Giving Cards* to-date (12/01/2014).
- The total committed on these *Estimate of Giving Cards* to our ministry for 2015 to-date is **205,728.00**.

**Worship Choir
Christmas
Cantata 2014**



Please join us on Sunday, December 21 at the 10:30 a.m. Worship Service or at 3:00 p.m. as we present this beautiful cantata of music inspired by the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ! What a wonderful way to immerse yourself in the joy of Christmas and to bring your family, friends, and neighbors to enjoy it, too!

Exciting News

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee is pleased to announce that **Doug Pascoe** has been hired as our **Parish Visitor** beginning Dec. 1st. Doug and his wife, Joy, are known to many here since Doug has previously served as our Parish Visitor. Most recently, he was the pastor at the Granite City Good Shepherd and Dewey Ave. United Methodist Churches. Currently, he leads worship every Sunday in the Weston wing of the United Methodist Village. Doug will be serving us for five hours a week.



SUNDAYS AT ST. PAUL IN DECEMBER 8:15 & 10:30 A.M. SERVICES

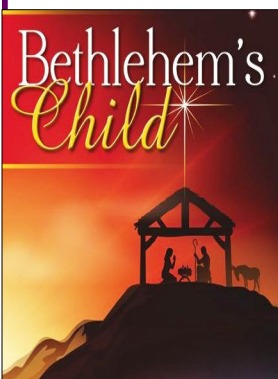
“More Jesus Time” for Pre-school - 5th grade and Nursery is provided for the 10:30 a.m. service.



7 2nd Sunday of Advent. Communion celebrated. Pastor Daryl continues his sermon series, *Comfort & Joy*, by focusing on Isaiah 40:3-5 and *The Pardon of Christ*.



14 3rd Sunday of Advent. Birthday Sunday. Pastor Daryl continues his sermon series, *Comfort & Joy*, by focusing on Isaiah 40:6-9 and *The Presence of Christ*.



21 4th Sunday of Advent. March to the Manger. Cradle Roll Sunday. During both services, we bless those connected with St. Paul who welcomed babies into their families this year. Each child will receive a Christmas ornament. During the 8:15 a.m., Pastor Daryl continues his sermon series, *Comfort & Joy*, by focusing on Isaiah 40:3-5 and *The Power of Christ*. During the 10:30 a.m. worship service, **the Worship Choir will present the Christmas Cantata, *Bethlehem's Child*.** At the end of each service, a St. Paul family will portray the Holy Family for March to the Manger. You are invited to bring your Christmas gifts and lay them down at the feet of the baby Jesus. Some choose to wrap the gifts, but it is not necessary.



28 1st Sunday after Christmas. Pastor Daryl concludes his sermon series, *Comfort & Joy*, by celebrating that lasting joy we possess because Jesus has come. *Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King; let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing.* This is the truth and the joy of Christmas.



DECEMBER - Church of Rock (COR) Youth News

Psalm 136:26 - "Give thanks to the God of heaven, for His steadfast love endures forever."

Contact Kevin Rader at (618) 303-0044 for December info!

Merry Christmas to the St. Paul family!





Nurses Notes for DECEMBER 2014 from Parish Nurse, Eileen!

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests." Luke 2:14

Christmas is a glorious holiday in which we celebrate the birth of the Savior. We have much to keep us busy- parties, family, Christmas programs at church, caroling- many ways to celebrate. Yet for some it can be a time of sadness, loneliness, anxiety, and depression. Why is it that we have every good intention of having a Christmas season like the Maxwell House coffee commercials and the Hallmark Holiday movies but it never turns out to be that way? Because those are not so real and don't reflect real life. But take heart- we as believers can offer the love and peace of Jesus during this time of year.

Why is it such a hard time for many of us? Well, we tend to focus on our schedules, finances, our weight gain from Thanksgiving, (that is for all the women out there), and all of the things that we have to hurry and get done so we can enjoy Christmas! How about this year we try to focus our hearts and minds to anticipate the season with a quiet heart- a time to receive God's love and peace and be refused to do the work He has called each of us to do.

REST: Rather than thinking of all you have to do this season, can you consciously slow down long enough to remember why (if there is a reason) everything needs to get done? Christmas was never meant to be a time of busyness, stress, long lines, packed to-do lists and running around like goose trying to get all of it done. Rather, it is a time to slow down and reflect on the greatest gift that we have received—the gift of a Savior, to a world that was previously without hope. To rest is to trust Him in all things, and to trust Him in all things is to rest.

RELY: With so much to do to prepare for the holidays, it's natural for us to rely on people around us to notice when we're overwhelmed, offer a helping hand, or just lend some encouragement and support. The problem is, at this time of year, everyone else around you is as busy as you are. These are the times to go to God in prayer and pour out your heart before Him. Scripture says God understands our thoughts from afar (Psalms 139:2) God is not too big to listen to our needs, even when we think they are not important. Everything about us is important to Him! When we depend on others for emotional support, or a kind word to keep us going, we tend to feel let down. But God, our Sustainer, knows and understands our feelings. Go to Him in prayer. Talk to Him about how you feel. Rely on Him for what you need. Relax knowing He hears, He cares, and He understands.

REFRESH: Are you tired and dragging? Take some time to read your Bible and be "refreshed". Let the Word be a source of energy for you. We are told that all scripture is God breathed (2nd Timothy 3:16) so get yourself a breath of fresh air each day! Start with your favorite passages, or pick up a Christmas devotion book and see if you don't get your second wind by spending time in the Word.

REMEMBER: When we remember what's most important in life it can keep us from stressing out. We were made to love God and enjoy Him forever. And Jesus said the greatest commandment was to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, and love others as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-39). That means that all you think you have to do, and all the money you feel you have to spend, pale in comparison to the people right in front of you. As you start to stress, ask yourself this question: What is most important: the project or the people? The perfectly-decorated house or the kids who want me to play with them? The amount of money I spend on someone, or the time I'm willing to spend with them? Remember to ask yourself- is this something that I feel "called" to do? We are not all called to the same mission.

REFLECT: I am speaking to faith based communities- two churches and the United Methodist Village. Christmas is about the greatest gift you and I could ever receive—the gift of a Savior that God sent to this earth be a perfect example to us of living faith, to die for our sins and be the perfect sacrifice God required for our justification, and to rise again to conquer death and offer us life eternal. Because there was nothing we could ever do to deserve that gift, we accept it humbly and, out of our love for God and His perfect gift to us, we are to seek to love and give to others.

RESPOND: It is all about what we have been given, and what we can give to others. It doesn't have to be all about money or materialistic gifts. Maybe all you can give is some of your time, a smile, a soft comfy shoulder to lean on, and a word of encouragement. Ask God to help you find a way to give a bit of "you" to each person in your life-family and stranger that you may encounter. Sometimes they are "divine" appointments!

REJOICE! Emmanuel has come! This precious piece of news is all we need to have a celebration!

May your Christmas be one of **REMEMBERANCE** this year!

Eileen





DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

"Before you were born, I set you apart for a special work!"

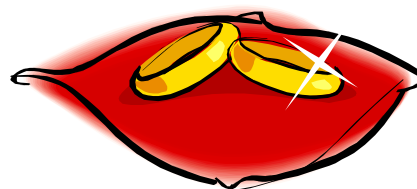
December 01	Chiles, Harvey	December 16	Helmkamp, Rick	December 29	Laws, Billy
December 01	Gowan, Amy	December 16	Palmer, Stephanie	December 29	Brueggeman, Ada
December 01	Schlemer, Bobbie Jean	December 16	Wells, Emily	December 30	Voorhees, Ruth
December 02	Ortegren, Al	December 16	Hart, Elaine	December 30	Caldwell, Jack
December 04	Harlan, Sandy	December 18	Ford, Joan	December 30	Caldwell, Devin
December 05	Sparling, Meghan	December 19	Brown, Gary	December 31	Uzzell, Iris
December 05	Voorhees, Laura	December 19	Adams, Heather	December 31	Herndon, Jim
December 06	Poore, Jerry	December 19	Parker, Megan	December 31	Phelps, Susan
December 06	Rader, Lindsey	December 19	Cruthis, Kailynne	December 31	Maxwell, Lillian
December 08	Davis, Tammy	December 20	Cloninger, Wayne		
December 08	Blacklock, Will	December 20	Champa, Jenn		
December 10	Michels, Earline	December 20	Hendricks, Brody		
December 10	Ramirez, Erika	December 22	Clark, John		
December 10	Adams, Reid	December 24	Kainz, Steve		
December 11	Harris, Ruth	December 24	Brown, Ben		
December 11	Fennewald, Claire	December 24	Harlan, Kaydence		
December 12	Kasinger, Dorothy	December 24	Harlan, Kristina		
December 13	Gwaltney, Jamie	December 26	Ford, Don Sr.		
December 13	Cameron, Jon	December 28	Babcock, Orisa		
December 13	Myers, Elise	December 28	Ross, Madilyn		
December 14	Liedtke, Mike	December 29	Basden, Bill		
December 15	Duryea, Dan	December 29	Pascoe, Doug		
December 15	Sullivan, Becky	December 29	Hubbard, Glenn		
December 15	Giddings, Jessica				
December 15	Eyster, Devin				



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

December 06	Hamilton, George Sr. & Donna
December 14	Vore, Tom & Shana
December 16	Ramirez, Anthony & Erika
December 19	Oertle, Steve & Jill
December 20	Badman, David & Donna
December 22	Brown, Gary & Julie
December 24	Sullivan, William & Jill
December 26	Roberts, Randy & Karen

December 28	Dawson, Steve & Sarah
December 29	Bunt, Don Sr. & Evelyn
December 29	Mortland, Greg & Lana



Church Directories are available from the Church office!

Changes/Additions: Minnie Tindall 448 Sheridan, Apt. C, Bethalto, IL 62010;
Tony & Nikki Garland 424 East Pearl Street, Jerseyville, IL 62052;
Kevin & Lindsey Rader 21 Halleck Avenue, Edwardsville, IL 62052.

If you are going to move soon, give the church office advance notice of your new address. Also, remember to update us on your new phone number. Thank you!



Monthly Loose Change Project! (loose coins in offering plate)

December's Loose Change Project is Salvation Army in Alton. The Salvation Army helps individuals and families facing special hardships with food, transportation, rent, and utility assistance, as well as providing meals and shelter for the homeless. May God bless and multiply your gifts!

DECEMBER Ushers (10:30):

Dec. 7: Scott & Jamie Gwaltney, Deb Fansler

Dec. 14: Joe & Sherry Huff

Dec. 21: Tamera Martin, Sydney Martin

Dec. 28: Jamie Keith

GREETERS NEEDED FOR SOME 8:15 SERVICES

Please Call the Church Office (259-5210) if you will help be an usher or greeter!

Average Attendance for NOVEMBER 2014

Early Service	48
Late Service	81
Sunday School	44
Visitors	4



NOVEMBER Stewardship

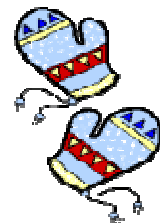
Budget Offering:	through 11/30/2014	\$27233.00
Designated Giving:	through 11/30/2014	\$2774.50
	Capital Improvements	270.00
	Loose Change	127.00
	Flowers	199.50
	Hickerson Scholarship	105.00
	Youth	20.00
	Awakening Service	1132.00
	CRAVE	400.00
	Salvation Army	50.00
	Funeral Dinners	100.00
	Upper Rooms	21.00
	Sweet Sounds	200.00
	Charles McKnelly	100.00
	Mid-West Mission Center	50.00
Sale of McDonald's Stock		4745.83
Refunds		280.00
Student Offering		40.00
Christmas Offering		20.00
Thanksgiving Offering		605.00
Total:		\$35698.33

**DEADLINE FOR
JANUARY 2015
STEEPLE, Thurs.,
DECEMBER 18th!**



Cap 'N Mitten Tree 2014

We will be collecting caps, mittens, gloves, and scarves for all ages, plus children's underwear and socks through December 9th!





open hearts
open minds
open doors



ST PAUL
united methodist church

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/171020936311281/>

Our mission is to share our love of Christ to open hearts for a life filled with amazing possibilities!

Who are we?

We are young adults with a passion for living, a passion for learning, and a passion for loving Christ! We CRAVE knowledge that helps us live more like Christ, we CRAVE a life filled with Christ's love, and we CRAVE fellowship with others that CRAVE the same. **Do you feel like something is missing from your life?** We invite you to join us as we feed the craving to learn more and build a stronger relationship with Christ! Young adults – 18 yrs old to 30s.

CRAVE Facilitator - Betsy Blacklock 618.250.3858
betsy.healingimages@yahoo.com

CRAVE IHOP Sunday: 1st Sunday of the month
@8a.m. - IHOP Wood River

Fundraisers: Oct. - Dec. we sell PECANS!

Christmas Craft & Cookie Festival, Dec. 6th

Awakening Praise Band: Practice on Tues. @6p.m.

Awakening Preview Services: Dec. 13th, 20th, & 24th
All are invited to check it out!

Awakening Service Kick-Off: Sat., Jan. 10, 2015
5p.m. - Contemporary Worship Service, Fellowship Hall



PECANS :

This year's plain pecans are here and available now! Others coming

after beginning of Nov. The costs are:

\$10.00 for the 1lb. bag of plain or **\$8.00** for a bag of the chocolate covered pecans or a bag of cinnamon glazed pecans.

The pecans being sold are a Fundraiser for CRAVE and the new Awakening Service!

Catch the Spirit of Christmas at

St. Paul United Methodist Church

10 North Center St., East Alton, IL 618-259-5210

Christmas Craft & Cookie Festival

Saturday, Dec 6th 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Cookie Walk • Arts & Crafts • One stop shopping!

Local vendors with the perfect Christmas gift ideas!

Cookie decorating station for the kids • Free chair massage •

Hot beverage café • Christmas Carols

Santa Claus • and much more!



Free Admission! Fun for the entire family.

Salvation Army Bell Ringing will be on

Friday, December 12th

10 a.m.-8 p.m.

at Walmart in Wood River



We ring at two entrances so come and support our efforts on this day and help fill the kettles so those in need may receive what they need! Thank you in advance!





We Say Goodbye To...

Kyle Allen "Al" Trimm, 27, passed away suddenly due to an unforeseen medical condition. He was at home with his family. He was born to Mike and Karen (Ballard) Trimm on his mom's birthday, August 20th, 1987.

Kyle graduated from Civic Memorial High School (Class of 2006). He was an avid outdoorsman. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, and sand volleyball. He spent many a goose seasons with his Dad and The Goose House Gang of Southern, IL. When he wasn't outside, he was cheering on the St. Louis Blues and/or Cardinals or whipping up something amazing in the kitchen. Boy that kid could cook!

What he loved most was his family. His Mom, Karen; Dad, Mike; Sisters, Michele and Jennifer; and Nieces, Chloe and Baylee. He is also survived by his Maternal Grandma, Mildred Ballard.

Kyle will be joining the many that passed before him, including his Grandpa Bob, his Grandma Rossie and Grandpa John, his Uncle Dale, and Cousin Shawn. Kyle is also going to have his hands full with his Nephew, Mikyle Lee Trimm. Kyle will have him hunting and fishing in no time.

In addition to his family, Kyle is survived by many aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends.

Kyle Trimm died unexpectedly. Here is small part of the message I shared at his funeral service: If you come here today asking God why, you are not alone. And, in our faith, it is okay to ask the Why question. There is a whole series of Psalms that scholars label **the lament psalms** because they complain that the evil prosper, while the good suffer; that God's ways seem hidden to us, and that God seems to have quit caring for us.

The most familiar one is Psalm 22. Listen today to the first two verses of this psalm: ¹ *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?* ² *O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest.* You might have remembered that Jesus speaks those words of the first verse from the cross: ¹ *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*

King David—a hero of the faith—does not hesitate to complain to God here and later in Psalm 69: ³ *I am exhausted from crying for help. My throat is hoarse.*

My eyes are strained from looking for my God. We come here feeling like these: exhausted from crying for help, wondering *why* and hearing no good answers, no satisfying answers in return.

Sometimes, that's how life is this side of heaven. God isn't going to punish us or kick us out of His kingdom for asking the *hard questions*. Our faith is strong enough to endure the harsh realities of life. The inclusion of the lament psalms in our Holy Scripture is proof of this.

So if you ask me: WHY KYLE, WHY NOW—my response is I don't know. I'm going to add Kyle's death to all those that I plan to ask God about whenever I meet Him face-to-face. In this imperfect world, some very bad things happen to some very good people. To a gentle giant whom everyone loved. If there is a greater purpose in this, I don't see it.

But you know, I'm not God. My sight and my understanding are limited. Paul observed in I Corinthians 13 that: ¹² *We don't yet see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We'll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us!* ¹³ *But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us toward that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love.*

Until we reach heaven, we live with uncertainty because we aren't God and we don't see the big picture.

Let me highlight for a moment how Paul says we shall live in the meantime because it does help us through this time of grief. First, we are to **Trust steadily in God.**

The wife of a Scottish Pastor died suddenly and, of course, he was devastated. When he returned to a pulpit weeks later, the first sermon he preached was called *But When Life Tumbles In, What Then?* Although the language is a little archaic, what Rev. Arthur Gossip says is timely for us:

Continued on page 10



Christmas Offering



The Finance Committee and Church Council have decided that the **undesignated amount** of the Christmas Offering will be used for the general budget. The general

budget provides the funds for the ministry and operating expenses of the church. As always, you are encouraged to designate your Christmas Offering for missionaries, ministries, or projects supported by St. Paul. There is a Christmas Offering envelope included in your box of envelopes. You may also use any pew envelope to make the Christmas Offering. Simply mark the envelope as your "Christmas Offering."

Although your Christmas Offering may be placed in the offering plate on any Sunday or mailed to the Church Office, many people like to lay their offering at the feet of the baby Jesus during the **March to the Manger**. **March to the Manger occurs during both worship services on Dec. 21st**. Some people choose to wrap their offering as a gift for the baby Jesus.

(Kyle Trimm - Continued from page 9)

I do not understand this life of ours. But still less can I comprehend how people in trouble and loss and bereavement can fling away peevishly from the Christian faith.

In God's name, fling to what? Have we not lost enough without losing that too? If Christ is right – if, as He says, there are somehow, hidden away from our eyes as yet, still there, wisdom and planning and kindness and love in these dark dispensations – then we can see them through...If Christ was right, and immortality and the dear hopes of which He speaks do really lie a little way ahead, we can manage to make our way to them...You people in the sunshine may believe the faith, but we in the shadow must believe it. We have nothing else.

We in the shadow we must believe the faith today because we have nothing else. Christ is the rock upon whom we stand to keep from slipping into utter despair. Christ alone comforts us by promising that as He cared for Kyle upon this earth, He continues that care in Heaven.

Paul says we **hope unswervingly**. In I Thessalonians 4, Paul proclaims: ¹³ *Brothers and sisters, we don't want you to be ignorant about those who have died. We don't want you to grieve like other people who have no hope.* ¹⁴ *We believe that Jesus died and came back to life. We also believe that, through Jesus, God will bring back those who have died. They will come back with Jesus.*

Our great hope is that Jesus is the Resurrection and Life. Those who believe in Him will be raised to new life. Our separation from this life we love is but for a little while.

Finally, Paul advises us to **love extravagantly**. Out of these three: faith, hope, and love, the greatest is love. Paul is certain of this. I always try to find a Bible verse or a portion of a verse that captures the essence of person. Kyle loved extravagantly—spontaneously grabbing his mother to give her a hug...being the gentle giant in the lives of his friends...handing some money to a homeless man at the Walmart and when the man asked if he had enough for a value meal, digging down deep and giving the man all he had.

Michele shared this statement that captured the family's feelings about Kyle: **HAVING A SOFT HEART IN A CRUEL WORLD IS COURAGE NOT WEAKNESS**. All of us are gathered here because Kyle's soft heart made this world a little less dark, a little more friendly, and a lot less lonely. In this time of sorrow, we are thankful that with Kyle...we never left our love for each other unspoken. It was always there at the core of our relationship!

Please keep Mildred Ballard; Mike, Karen, Jennifer Trimm; and Eric, Michele, Chloe, and Baylee Allshouse in your prayers. Pastor Daryl

**THE WOMEN OF WORSHIP THANK YOU!**

The Women of Worship wish to thank everyone who helped make our first **CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE** such a great success. Our talented crafters enjoyed making and designing items which were for sale and hope that those of you who purchased gifts or decorations will enjoy them. Money from all of our projects will be distributed at our **Christmas Party, Dec. 4th beginning at 6 p.m.** All women of the church are invited to participate. Again – Thank you to all who helped in any way!

CHANGES TO FACILITY USE:

Please note these changes in the use of the church on Saturdays beginning in December 2014. **Anyone using the Fellowship Hall** must complete their event by 4 p.m. and have everything cleaned up by 4:30 p.m. Afternoon weddings must begin by 3:30 p.m. at the latest. Evening weddings may be held beginning after 6:30 p.m. Thank you.

2015 NEWSLETTERS:

The Church Office has received a couple of calls concerning the 2015 Newsletter (The Steeple). If stamp prices do not go up next year the cost to have the newsletter mailed directly to you at home will be **\$8.50**. Of course we will still email the Newsletter, place it on the website, and have copies at the church for you to pick up, to have extras to give to friends you invite to church, and for visitors to take. Watch in the bulletin for a sheet to sign to request your Newsletter to be mailed to you. Or you can go ahead and send your request to the Church Office and your check for **\$8.50**.

Any questions...please call 259-5210.

*Celebrate the birth
of Christ at the
Christmas Eve Services*

Christmas Eve Worship Services:**5:00 p.m. Family Service.**

We tell the Christmas story, sing carols, do pantomimes with the children, and end with a candlelight service.

This service lasts 45 minutes.

7:00 p.m. Traditional Service.

Childcare provided. The Christmas Service of most of our childhoods with the Scripture readings, familiar carols, and the Christmas story. The service ends with a candlelight service.

This service lasts one hour.

11:00 p.m. Contemporary Service

led by CRAVE. A Christmas service aimed at Young Adults and the Young at Heart. This service features carols in new arrangements and new Christmas praise music. If you like JOY-FM, this is your Christmas service. We serve communion and end with a candlelight service.



Poinsettia Orders

It is time to order your poinsettias. The cost is **\$6.50** per poinsettia. The **order deadline is Sunday, December 7th.** The poinsettias may be taken home following the services on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24th. Please indicate when you order to whom it is “*in memory*” or “*in honor*” of and it is **important** to include your payment when you order. Questions? Call **259-5210**.

Offering Envelopes



The 2015 Offering Envelopes will be handled like last years. It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that you

read this information...

If you are someone who has regularly given on a **weekly** basis you will pick up your 2015 Offering Envelopes in the church entry-way in December, as we have done before.

If you are someone who normally gives on a **monthly** basis you will receive your 2015 Offering Envelopes through the mail to your house. They will be sent bulk mail to you sometime in December. They will arrive at your house so watch for them. You will not receive a box but an envelope with your offering envelopes inside. **PLEASE, do not use them until January 2015.**

If you would like to trade weekly envelopes for monthly or vise versa, call the office as soon as possible.

Thank you!!

DINNER BELL

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’
- LUKE 14:17 NIV

**Jesus is the Reason
For the Season!**

**Merry Christmas
Everyone!**





CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS AT ST. PAUL

Advent, the four Sundays before Christmas, is a time of preparation for the birth of the baby. It is a time of remembering Jesus' birth and preparing for His return. During our worship services, individuals and families light the candles on our Advent wreath; counting down the weeks before Christmas.

WORSHIP

We invite you to join us in our Advent Worship Services on Sundays at 8:15 & 10:30 a.m. Pastor Daryl is preaching a sermon series, *Comfort and Joy*, based on Isaiah 40. (Iris Uzzell's class that meets at 9:15 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall is studying the same themes that Pastor Daryl is preaching on.)

March to the Manger, a time when a St. Paul family portrays the Holy Family and we lay our gifts at the feet of the baby Jesus, will be celebrated on Sun., Dec. 21 during the 8:15 & 10:30 a.m. services. Some choose to wrap their gift, but this is not required. You may designate your offering for any missionary, mission work or project. If you leave your gift undesignated, it goes to support our broader ministry through the general budget.

The Christmas Cantata, *Bethlehem's Child*, will be presented on Sun., Dec. 21 at 10:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. The Worship Choir is under the direction of Eldon Wold, Jr. Since few area churches offer a Christmas cantata, we encourage you to invite your friends to the 3 p.m. performance of *Bethlehem's Child*. It will be a blessing to all.

AWAKENING SERVICE PREVIEW SERVICES ARE ON SAT., DEC. 13 AND SAT., DEC. 20 AT 5 P.M. IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL. WE ARE BLESSED WITH A SPIRIT-FILLED AND SPIRITED WORSHIP BAND. IT IS OUR HOPE THAT MANY WILL CHOOSE TO EXPERIENCE THIS NEW WORSHIP SERVICE. IT MAY NOT BE HOW YOU CONNECT WITH GOD, BUT YOU MAY KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS LOOKING FOR A CONTEMPORARY SERVICE JUST LIKE THIS. *OUR LAUNCH SUNDAY IS JANUARY 10th.*

Christmas Eve Worship Services:

5 p.m. Family Service. We tell the Christmas story, sing carols, do pantomimes with the children, and end with a candlelight service.

This service lasts 45 minutes.

7 p.m. Traditional Service. Childcare provided. The Christmas Service of most of our childhoods with the Scripture readings, familiar carols, and the Christmas story. The service ends with a candlelight service.

This service lasts one hour.

11 p.m. Contemporary Service led by CRAVE. A Christmas service aimed at Young Adults and the Young at Heart. This service features carols in new arrangements and new Christmas praise music. If you like JOY-FM, this is your Christmas service. We serve communion and end with a candlelight service.

FELLOWSHIP

Christmas Dinner/Program is Sat., Dec. 6 at 6 p.m. Bob Brown serves a wonderful Christmas meal followed by a Christmas variety program organized by Noël Schiber and Jill Oertle. (No set cost for meal; donations are received.) The Helping Hands for Christ Class made our table decorations!

Continued on page 14



Christmas Celebrations Continued from page 13

Gingerbread Houses may be decorated by all ages on Sun., Dec. 21st after the 10:30 a.m. service. A meal of pizza and salad is provided. Reserve your house by calling the Church Office, 259-5210, or emailing info@stpaulwired.org.

OUTREACH

Christmas Craft & Cookie Festival is Sat., Dec. 6 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

Proceeds benefit the Awakening Service.

- * Cookie Walk
- * Arts & Crafts
- * Cookie decorating station for kids
- * Free chair massage
- * Hot beverage café
- * Christmas Carols
- * SANTA CLAUS *

Women of Worship **Cap 'N Mitten Tree** outside the Sanctuary doors is ready to be decorated with caps, mittens, gloves, and scarves. Donations are used to keep those in need warm this winter. Donations will be accepted through Dec. 9th.

St. Paul is manning the **Salvation Army** kettles at Walmart on Fri., Dec. 12 from 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Come ring with us! Call the Church Office, 259-5210 for available slots.

We are the area pick-up site for **ANGEL TREE GIFTS** for 50 families on Sat., Dec. 20 from 1-4 p.m.

The gifts are provided to children who have parents who are incarcerated.

Last month, we completed our collection of toys for the **Roxana Jr. & Sr. High School Student Councils' Christmas Party**. Your gifts will be handed out by the youth on Dec. 6th; making many children so very happy.



Awakening Service Progress

Awakening is the new Saturday evening contemporary service that will be offered as a 3rd option for worship here at St. Paul. The official kick-off will take place on January 10th. There will be preview services in December; we will keep you updated on the dates because we would love your feedback as we celebrate God's abundant grace on Saturday evenings!

CHURCH OUTREACH FOR CHRISTMAS

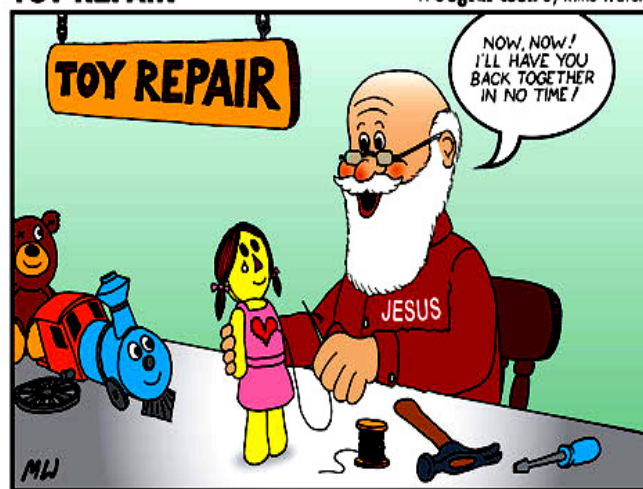


THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU GAVE TO HELP THE CHILDREN THIS CHRISTMAS!



TOY REPAIR

A Joyful'toon by Mike Waters



He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

- PSALM 147:3 NIV

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