



# The Steeple

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



**DECEMBER 2016**

*"Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy infant, so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace."*

One of my favorite childhood memories is the 11 p.m. Christmas Eve service at our church. The sanctuary would plunge into darkness. The choir would light their candles from the Christ candle and pass the light to us. Gradually, the light of Christ would pass from person to person until every corner of the sanctuary glowed with the light. Then, we would sing *"Silent night, holy night."*

Although I knew how the service would end, awe always filled my soul. What wondrous love is this that almighty God entered into our lives as a baby. What wondrous love is this that the baby was born to die, so I might live. Kneeling in my mind at the foot of the manger, I realized how undeserved and amazing is God's grace.

As I plan the Christmas Eve services, sometimes I momentarily consider slipping another carol into the *"Silent night, holy night"* slot. I quickly abandon these thoughts because no other carol evokes the same feelings for me. *"Silent night, holy night"* is the porthole that transports us from this world into the holy presence of God. There we receive the infusion of awe and grace that we so desperately need.

In Debra's church, the children's Christmas pageant would be presented every Christmas Eve. Debra remembers the thrill of portraying Mary. Once you've been a Mary you're connected with her forever. In a small way, the Mary moments and feelings become your own: the wonder that almighty God would choose you as the mother of the savior. The pondering about all the events that first Christmas night. The great sorrow that arises from watching your baby boy die upon a cross.

At St. Paul, Meg loved the Christmas plays. Not only did she enjoy retelling the Christmas story, but this stage experience sparked a love for the theater that continued throughout High School. I am convinced it is why Meg looks forward to returning to New York and seeing Broadway shows.

I'm looking forward to seeing this year's Christmas Play, *The Christmas Cupcake*. It is my hope that our children become so caught up in the retelling the story of the first Christmas that it makes the story more real. And, in a mysterious way, the Christmas story becomes an integral part of their life story.

I want Christmas at St. Paul to be special for every child (and the child in every one of us.) This is my Christmas prayer for your family.

When we light our candles on Christmas Eve and sing *"Silent night, holy night,"* I won't dismiss the moment with the thought: *"Been there. Done that!"* No, I'll think: *"Been there. Done that. Need this!"* I need Christmas so very much, because I need to be transported once more into the presence of God. I need to hear these words: *"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."*

We invite you to join us on Christmas Eve for the Family Service at 5 p.m. or the Traditional Service at 7 p.m. Those words from Isaiah will be the centerpiece of both services. See you on Christmas Eve.

Pastor Daryl

P.S. We have one service on Christmas Day at 8:15 a.m.

We will sing the beloved Christmas carols another time before putting them away until next year.

## Information for the holidays...

**Christmas Eve Services:** 5 p.m. Family Service  
7 p.m. Traditional Service

**Christmas Day, Sun., Dec. 25:** One worship service at 8:15 a.m.

**New Year's Day, Sun., Jan. 1:** One worship service at 10:00 a.m.





## OUR CHURCH FAMILY & THANK YOUS!

- On Nov. 5th at the Awakening Service the **Cranmer family** became a part of our church family in a big way. **Christian & Lauren Cranmer** became our newest members here at St. Paul. Their four children: **Madelynn Annalise Cranmer, Marjorie Anna Jean Cranmer, Brady Charles Cranmer,** and **Clark Bennett Cranmer** were all baptized that day as well. Congratulations and welcome to the St. Paul UMC family!
- Our prayers and deepest sympathies go to those who have lost loved ones recently. The family of **Earline Michels**, widow of Rev. Mike Michels (former pastor at St. Paul UMC); the family of **Robert Sparks**, brother-in-law of Betsy & Bob Blacklock and Sharon Szegedy; the family of **Judy Hanfelder**, wife of our custodian, Joe Hanfelder; the family of **Mary Prosser**, friend of the Pruetzels; the family of **Del Milhouse**, mother of Rev. Mark Milhouse, pastor Greenfield UMC; the family of **Joyce Feyerabend**, sister-in-law of Alice Burrows; the family of **Ralph Alois**, father/father-in-law of John & Jolie Alois; the family of **Gary Trimm**, brother/brother-in-law of Mike & Karen Trimm; the family of **Daniel Carlisle**, newborn great-grandson of Willard & Sandy Chapman; the family of **Edith Liedtke**, mother/mother-in-law of Gregg & Lana Liedtke; the family of **Wilma Walls**, mother of Gene Walls; and the family of **Rev. David Walls** of our conference. May you all know God's comfort and peace in the days ahead.
- We rejoice in the birth of **Charlie Mae Sparling** on Nov. 12th to Rick & Meghan (Murbarger) Sparling! Her delighted Grandmother is Diane Murbarger and her Great Uncle & Aunt are Ben & Beulah Moore. We ask God to bless this growing family in all His ways!
- St. Paul salutes the Nov. 18-20 Roxana High School production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* directed by **Debbie & Mark Bacus**. Mark also designed the set. The students at **Roxana High School** showed their courageous acting chops by taking a different look at Shakespeare through a modern interpretation for the fall play. *Titania*, Queen of the Fairies, was played by junior **Sydney Martin** and **Sydney Palmer** played *Moth*, one of the fairies. **Trustin Dunse** ran the spotlight. Congratulations to everyone for a job well done and a humorous evening at the theater!
- Congratulations to our sixth graders who were presented Study Bibles on Bible Sunday, Nov. 20: **Gracie Mortland, Zoe Hart, Kaydence Harlan, Kristina Harlan,** and **Eli Kasinger**. 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 during this holy season.
- **Boy Scout Troop 777**, chartered by St. Paul, collected **6,749 cans of food** on Saturday, Nov. 19 for the local food pantries. What a hard working group of young men

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**THANK YOU:** So many thanks for your support in all the difficult days that Judy had. The prayers, cards, calls, and conversations have helped so much as we had to say goodbye to her when God released her to heaven. You all are so caring and it really shows in times like these. May God bless you as you have blessed me. **Joe Hanfelder & family**

**THANK YOU:** My sincere thanks to my St. Paul family who has been so supportive, during my recent illness, with your prayers, expressions of concern, cards, and keeping me well fed. I appreciate everything you have done. Best wishes during the holiday season and throughout the New Year.

**Dottie Aitken**



# An Awakening Christmas Sing-A-Long Sat., December 17th @5:00 p.m.



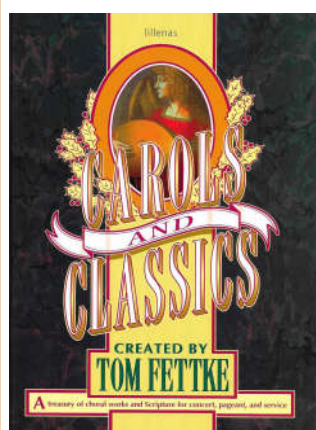
Put on your most festive Christmas spirit by singing classic Christmas carols and hymns, led by the Awakening Praise Band! Hot cocoa, cookies, and milk will all be provided!

And if you have one of those “ugly” Christmas sweaters, this would be a great night to wear it!



## GINGERBREAD HOUSE TIME!

Children of all ages are invited to stay after the 10:30 a.m. service on **December 18** to enjoy a pizza lunch and an opportunity to decorate a gingerbread house. **Reservations** are requested and there is a sign-up sheet in the Education wing on the big bulletin board. Bring your friends! **No cost!** Parents are welcome for lunch and building. Houses will be pre-made from graham crackers. **Candy donations** are requested and a box is provided. A list of the types of candy that work best is by the box.



## Worship Choir Presents The 2016 Christmas Cantata

“CAROLS AND CLASSICS” is a Treasury of Choral Works and Scripture. A rich treasury of 27 traditional carols and well-loved Christmas classics in powerful and unique combinations by Tom Fettke. Selected scriptures are included for the retelling of the Christmas story.

**The Cantata will be presented on Sunday, Dec. 18th at the 10:30 a.m. service.**



## Salvation Army Bell Ringing will be on Friday, December 9th

**10 a.m.-8 p.m. at Walmart in  
Wood River (Grocery Doors)**

We ring with teams of two people each for one hour at a time... come and make a kettle donation while we are ringing the bells!





## Saturdays at St. Paul in DECEMBER 5:00 P.M. Service



Join us on SATURDAYS at 5 p.m. for Awakening - St. Paul's contemporary worship service in a family friendly setting. We hope you will join us (bring your family, friends, & neighbors) as we praise God & celebrate what the Holy Spirit has done!

### Our DECEMBER Speakers:

**3rd** - Service CANCELLED to join the Christmas Dinner & Program!

**10th** - "THE GIBSON GIRLS" Christmas Concert! Come Celebrate the season of Jesus! (free will offering taken for them)

**17th** - Christmas Sing-A-Long with all your favorites Christmas Carols and Hymns! Hot cocoa, cookies, and milk provided!

**24th** - Service CANCELLED to join the 5 p.m. or 7 p.m. Christmas Eve Services.

**31st** - Service CANCELLED ... Be safe on this New Year's Eve!

## Sundays at St. Paul in DECEMBER 8:15 & 10:30 A.M. Services

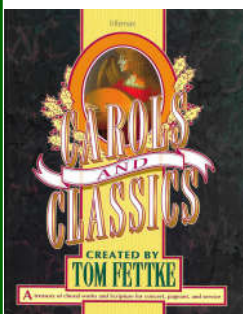
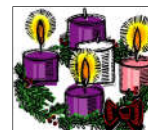
"More Jesus Time" for Pre-school - 5th grade and a Nursery is provided for the 10:30 a.m. service.



**4:** 2nd Sunday in Advent. Communion Celebrated. Pastor Daryl continues the sermon series, *A God With Skin in the Game*. Today, we talk about how God revealed the depth of His love for us in baby Jesus.



**11:** 3rd Sunday in Advent. Birthday Sunday. Pastor Daryl continues the sermon series, *A God With Skin in the Game*. Today, we talk about how true joy comes into the world through the baby Jesus.



**18:** 4th Sunday in Advent. March to the Manger. Cradle Roll Sunday. During the 8:15 a.m. service, Pastor Daryl concludes the sermon series, *A God With Skin in the Game*. Today, we talk about how the baby Jesus reconciles us with God and brings real peace into our lives. During the 10:30 a.m. service, the Worship Choir will present the Christmas Cantata, *Carols And Classics*. At both services, a family of St. Paul will portray the Holy Family. You are invited to bring your Christmas offering and lay it at the feet of the baby Jesus.



**25:** Christmas Day. 8:15 a.m. Service only! Pastor Daryl preaches on "A Story As Old As Time," as he reminds us that Jesus is the fulfillment of all of God's promises to us. For the last time until next year, we will sing the beloved Christmas carols.

**Jan. 1:** New Year's Day. 10 a.m. Service only! Communion celebrated. We begin the New Year with John Wesley's Covenant Service. Rather than make resolutions, this service leads us to make a new commitment or a recommitment of our lives to Jesus Christ. This makes a good beginning to the New Year.



### Nurse's Notes for DECEMBER 2016 from Parish Nurse, Eileen Cheatham RN, BC, B.S.N.

**Silent night, Holy Night, all is calm, all is bright-** at least that is how we want our family Christmas to be! But not all of them turn out to be all merry and bright- do they? Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of the Savior- celebrating with friends and participating in family get-togethers. Christmas celebrations are at church, at work, and at school. We even get with others to serve at volunteer opportunities- do you see where this is leading? Stress! Plus a lot of pressure to get everything just right. The kids are overexcited, and you are busy! There are trees to decorate, presents to buy and wrap, and food to cook; and don't forget choir practices! For others, Christmas is often a lonely time as family may not live close by- or maybe even passed away. For some, perhaps a relationship ended, or a loved one is very ill, or may have died unexpectedly. Or a friend betrayed you, or something didn't go your way at a meeting. It's no wonder the joyous, festive holiday feeling can fizzle out. There is evidence that Christmas can put a strain on families. I wonder what the holiday would be like if we just took a rest from retail, a little break from Amazon and just focused on being **still**. What if we were able to have a real silent night? **"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."** Psalm 46:10 NIV

Christmas is a joyous time, but the reality is that for many of us it's hard to experience that joy in the midst of all the turmoil and trials that are happening around us. But, just as God protected and guided Mary through a difficult time, allow Him to guide you this Christmas. Pray and share with Him what troubles your spirit, and allow Him to restore the joy of Christmas within you by holding you together.

**Be still...** These words do not seem to have a place in the hustle and bustle of a busy life, especially at Christmas time. Parties, presents and projects usually have us in a frantic frenzy as we rush from one event to the next. Often, before we know it, Christmas day has come and gone and we realize that, despite our good intentions, we never experienced the peace that comes from truly relishing in God's amazing love for us. Isn't it interesting that God commands us to **"Be still"**? Do you think it's because He knows we sometimes have a hard time doing it on our own? That's what I think! What happens when we actually take time to be still? The answer lies in Psalm 46:10...**"Be still and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."**

When you are still before God, you better understand that whatever you are facing, whatever your day has been like, you can completely rest in the fact that God is God. He's sovereign. He doesn't need our help- and knows exactly what is going on every minute of every day. Even better, He knows you by name and longs to be present with you in the still, quiet time- right smack dab in the middle of the Christmas season! Spend time today purposely pursuing stillness in different moments.

Perhaps you could wrap up in a blanket & head outside for a peek at the stars, wondering what that holy star looked like, the one that signaled Christ's birth many years ago. Maybe take a minute to watch your young child sleep as you wonder what Mary and Joseph thought of their newborn son as you gaze at your own child's (or grandchild's) sweet face.

Open your Bible, read a favorite Scripture... then sit and be still. This year, don't miss out on what is better. Be present where you are, in His presence. That is the greatest gift!

Following Him- Serving Him, Eileen





# DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

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

December 01 Gowan, Amy  
 December 01 Chiles, Harvey  
 December 01 Schlemer, Bobbie Jean  
 December 02 Ortegren, Al  
 December 04 Harlan, Sandy  
 December 05 Sparling, Meghan  
 December 05 Voorhees, Laura  
 December 06 Poore, Jerry  
 December 06 Rader, Lindsey  
 December 08 Davis, Tammy  
 December 08 Blacklock, Will  
 December 10 Ramirez, Erika  
 December 10 Adams, Reid  
 December 11 Harris, Ruth  
 December 11 Fennewald, Claire  
 December 12 Kasinger, Dorothy  
 December 13 Gwaltney, Jamie  
 December 13 Cameron, Jon  
 December 13 Myers, Elise  
 December 14 Liedtke, Mike  
 December 15 Duryea, Dan  
 December 15 Sullivan, Becky  
 December 15 Giddings, Jessica

December 15 Eyster, Devin  
 December 16 Helmkamp, Rick  
 December 16 Palmer, Stephanie  
 December 16 Wells, Emily  
 December 16 Hart, Elaine  
 December 18 Ford, Joan  
 December 19 Brown, Gary  
 December 19 Adams, Heather  
 December 19 Parker, Megan  
 December 19 Cruthis, Kailynne  
 December 20 Cloninger, Wayne  
 December 20 Champa, Jenn  
 December 20 Hendricks, Brody  
 December 24 Kainz, Steve  
 December 24 Brown, Ben  
 December 24 Harlan, Kaydence  
 December 24 Harlan, Kristina  
 December 26 Ford, Don Sr.  
 December 28 Babcock, Orisa

December 28 Ross, Madilyn  
 December 29 Basden, Bill  
 December 29 Pascoe, Doug  
 December 29 Hubbard, Glenn  
 December 29 Laws, Billy  
 December 29 Brueggeman, Ada  
 December 30 Voorhees, Ruth  
 December 30 Caldwell, Jack  
 December 30 Caldwell, Devin  
 December 31 Uzzell, Iris  
 December 31 Herndon, Jim  
 December 31 Phelps, Susan  
 December 31 Maxwell, Lillian



# 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



## Help us keep the church directory information current!



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 and/or email address.  
 Thank you!

**Merry Christmas to the  
 St. Paul family!**



### MONTHLY LOOSE CHANGE PROJECT

December's Loose Change Project is the 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!

# DEADLINE FOR JANUARY 2017 STEEPLE, Mon., DEC. 19th!

### NOVEMBER Stewardship

Budget Offering:	through 11/30/2016	\$21779.86
Designated Giving:	through 11/30/2016	\$1222.70
	Capital Improvements	240.00
	Loose Change	86.50
	Flowers	250.70
	Hickerson Scholarship	65.00
	Memorials	175.00
	Upper Room Donations	16.00
	Reimbursements	9.50
	Brad Fester/Wycliffe	100.00
	MidWest Dist. Center	50.00
	Staff Christmas Gift	50.00
	Endowment	180.00
UM Student Offering		97.00
Thanksgiving Offering		527.00
World Communion Offering		10.00
Capital Campaign		1370.00
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$25006.56</b>

Capital Campaign money received from members as of 11-30-16: **\$183,287.38**

### DECEMBER Ushers (10:30 a.m.):

- Dec 4: Connie Hickerson, Joe Huff
- Dec 11: Maggie Funke, Sherry Huff
- Dec 18: Joe & Sherry Huff
- Dec 25: NO 10:30 SERVICE!

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

### Average Attendance for NOVEMBER 2016

Early Service	41
Late Service	76
Sunday School	39
Visitors	8
4 Awakening Services	35



Hospice...  
Hospital...  
Nursing/Care Center...

PLEASE HELP US HELP YOU!

Whenever you or a member of your family enters the hospital, care/nursing center, or hospice, you need to call the Pastor or the Church Office. None of the area institutions will notify the church when you enter their facility due to privacy laws. We want to reach out to you at a time when you and your family may need it the most. Your call may be the only way for us to know of the situation. Thank you for your help!

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION - If bad weather requires the cancellation of worship services, we will:**

- ✦ leave a message on the answering machine
- ✦ contact TV Channel 5
- ✦ post a notice on our website [www.stpaulwired.org](http://www.stpaulwired.org) (if possible)
- ✦ contact those on the e-mail & phone prayer chain (if possible)



## 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. 18th.** Some people choose to wrap their offering as a gift for the baby Jesus.



### Eagle Scout Project Memorial Brick Prayer Walk

Kaleb Smith of Boy Scout Troop #777 (chartered by St. Paul) is raising money in order to construct a memorial brick, prayer walkway connecting the parking lot to the pavilion at St. Paul UMC. Your personalized, permanent memorial brick could become a part of this special walkway if you purchase one.

4"x8" brick costs \$50

8"x8" brick costs \$100

12"x12" granite block costs \$300

Gray granite benches cost \$2000

To receive an order form contact the St. Paul UMC office, 259-5210, or email to request one, [info@stpaulwired.org](mailto:info@stpaulwired.org).

*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, interact with the children, and end with a candlelight service.

This service lasts 45 minutes.

### 7:00 p.m. Traditional Service.

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

This service lasts one hour.

## 2017 NEWSLETTERS:

It is time to start thinking about the 2017 Newsletter (The Steeple). 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...call 259-5210.





St. Paul United Methodist Church and Awakening presents:

# The Gibson Girls

## Saturday, December 10

### @ 5 p.m.

10 N. Center Street, East Alton, IL during the contemporary Awakening Worship Service

Please join us for this FREE Christmas concert (a LOVE OFFERING will be received)! Join the four sisters of the musical group, The Gibson Girls, as they share their talent and love for the Lord.

Alisha, Tiffany, Kabryn, and Kathryn have been blessed with a heart for God and an incredible musical gift to share with others.

Their two albums titled "Christmas" and "Every Moment" are just small samples of the joy they bring to others.

**Come share in the excitement as they share their musical talents with us!**



### **THE WOMEN OF WORSHIP THANK YOU!**

The Women of Worship are pleased to announce that a profit of **\$1200** was made at our **Christmas Boutique**. A great big THANK YOU from The Women of Worship for everyone who helped in any way to make our **Christmas Boutique** a great success. We appreciate any donations and those who attended and purchased items. 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 Potluck**

**Luncheon on Thursday Dec. 8th at NOON with the business meeting to follow at 1:00 p. m. All women of the church are invited to participate. Bring your favorite dish of food and join us!**



**Estimate Of Giving Cards!** Thank you to all who have submitted their *Estimate of Giving Cards* for 2017. To-date **74** individuals/couples/families have committed to give **\$184,178** in 2017 toward the General Budget.

**There is still time to send your card if you have not done so. Your giving information is important as we set forth in ministry & mission for 2017! There are extra cards on the WELCOME table and in the church office. Thank you for your generosity as you give back out of all God has blessed you with!**



**Want to keep Christ in Christmas?**

Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, forgive the guilty, welcome the unwanted, care for the ill, love your enemies, and do unto others as you would have done unto you.

- Steve Maraboli

**GIFT OF JESUS**

A Joyful Toon by Mike Waters



Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men, for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.

— PSALM 107: 8-9 NIV



**PECANS:**

The cost is:  
**\$11.00** for the 1lb. bag of plain

The pecans being sold are a Fundraiser for the Women of Worship to add to the mission money raised so far this year!

**Offering Envelopes**



The 2017 Offering Envelopes will be handled like last years.

It is **IMPORTANT** that you read this information...

If you are someone who has regularly given on a **weekly** basis you will pick up your **2017 Offering Envelopes** in the church entryway in December, as we have done before.

If you are someone who normally gives on a **monthly** basis you will receive your **2017 Offering Envelopes** through the mail to your home. They will be sent bulk mail to you sometime in December. They will arrive at your home 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 2017.**

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

Thank you!!



**Christmas Dinner & Program**

It is a St. Paul tradition for the church to gather for a Christmas Dinner **on Saturday, December 3rd at 6 p.m.** There is no set charge for the dinner. Instead, **we all make a donation for the meal.** Dinner will be followed by **"The Christmas Cupcake,"** a musical featuring our children

& youth! Four contestants are chosen by the Yum Yum Foodie Network to bake their cutest Christmas cupcakes. Conflicts arise when the contestants push the telling of the real story of Christmas to the back burner. Everyone gets on board and tells the sweetest story ever told through the living nativity. Cute music, audience participation, & surprises will be in store for those who join us on Dec. 3! So plan now to attend it all! It is a wonderful evening filled with the joy of Christmas fellowship around the table as well as enjoying our children & youth sharing the news of the baby Jesus!



## Letter From the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church to President-elect, Donald Trump

Dear President-elect Trump:

On behalf of the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church, I offer congratulations to you, Mr. Trump, upon your election as the 45th president of the United States. Further, I thank Secretary Hillary Clinton for the gracious way she has accepted the voters' decision.

The Council's prayers are for you, your wife, Melania, and your family, and for Secretary Clinton, her husband, Bill, and their family, after such a tightly contested presidential race.

We are a deeply divided nation in a world community marred by division, war and unprecedented forced migration. This is a time for all Americans, particularly our political leaders, to put aside divisiveness and rancor and come together for the common good of this nation and the world. Thus, we pray for the healing of the nations and for God to grant you wisdom, compassion, moral conviction, courage and protection in your presidential leadership.

The Council of Bishops pledges to contribute to all efforts to build bridges to understanding that will lead to overcoming the gulfs that divide the nation and the world. I call to mind the best that is in us: we live under God; we are indivisible; and liberty and justice extend to all.

In 1789, Methodist Bishop Francis Asbury presented President George Washington with a Bible. The United Methodist Church has maintained this 225-plus-years tradition of giving a Bible signed by the bishops to each subsequent U.S. president.

The Council of Bishops is composed of 68 active and 97 retired bishops overseeing The United Methodist Church's 12.3 million members in the United States, Africa, Europe, and the Philippines. Mr. Trump, I look forward to an opportunity, following your inauguration, to present a Bible to you.

*And so, I pray for you and our nation:*

*Holy God, creator of us all,*

*Send your Spirit of peace, justice and freedom upon us;*

*Break down the walls of political partisanship and economic disparity,  
and make us one.*

*Give us wisdom to walk in your ways.*

*Remind us that your ways are not our ways;*

*That your power and might transcend the plans of every nation.*

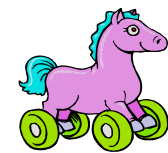
*Teach us again to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God.*

*Amen.*



**Poinsettia Orders**

It is time to order your poinsettias. The cost is **\$6.95** per poinsettia. The order deadline will be **Sunday, December 11th**. 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.



**Church outreach  
for Christmas**

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



**A Few Notes From The "Mission Possible Fundraising Committee":**

Please mark your calendars for some fun activities coming up in 2017!



We will be hosting a **"Souper" Bowl Party** the week before the Super Bowl. This will be a soup and chili contest as well as an opportunity to serve a Soup Luncheon after church on **JANUARY 29, 2017**. We will be asking for baked items and for folks to enter their best soups or chilis in the contest!



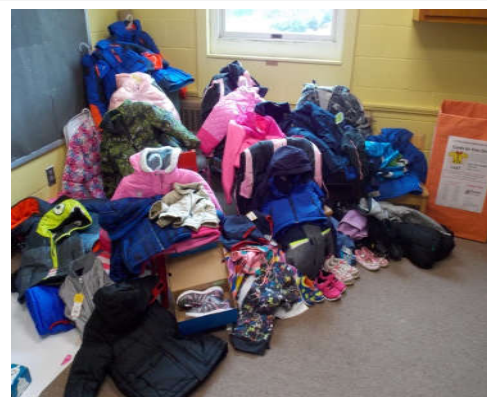
*Singing  
valentines*

In February we will be selling **singing telegrams for Valentines Day**. These will be delivered to school, work, homes, etc. Wherever that special friend or sweetheart happens to be. Delivery will be the **Saturday before Valentines Day (Feb. 11th)** as well as on **Valentines Day, Feb. 14th**.



In April we will be gathering up items for another fun **Trivia Night!** Don't be a fool and miss out on some great fun on **April 1st!** No joking!

**Thank you in advance for all of your support!**



**COAT AND SHOE COLLECTION  
FOR CHILDREN**



During October & November you gave 60 coats / jackets / sweatshirts and 8 pairs of shoes / boots.

On behalf of the children who received these items, the Outreach Ministry Team and Riverbend Head Start & Family Services thank you.



## ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

PRESERVING THE PHYSICAL INTEGRITY OF ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
AS A FOUNDATION OF FAITH AND MISSIONS IN OUR COMMUNITY***Mission Possible***

"THROUGH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE" MATTHEW 19:26

**UNDERSTANDING & GIVING TO MISSION POSSIBLE**

The following information is provided to clarify any misconceptions about our Mission Possible campaign and to further clarify how one might give to the cause. **Mission Possible** is a campaign to provide funding above and beyond our normal operational costs to address some much needed maintenance and renovation work at St. Paul. The primary target of the campaign is the replacement of our aging heating and air conditioning system (HVAC) as well as other much needed items for our church building and senior parsonage. We do this in large part as we consider the future of the ministry of St. Paul UMC and the over 50 diverse ministries that radiate from our church home, and as we consider the role our church building will play in future ministry.

The **October 2015 Mission Possible Commitment Weekend** was the kickoff to our fund raising campaign. So if you were absent or did not give to the campaign during that time, but now feel led to participate with your financial gifts, there is still plenty of time to participate. **In order that we can know where we stand with pledges, we ask that you fill out a commitment card (which is available in the church office) if you plan to give to the Mission Possible Campaign.**

Providing your gift(s):

- If you are interested in a one-time gift, send the donation to the church or place it in the Sunday offering, **but please be sure to note Mission Possible (or CFC for Capital Fund Campaign) on your check memo line and offering envelope.**
- You can also give online through our website.
- You can give using your credit card when you provide that information to the church office.
- You can give by cash or check.
- You can also provide financial contributions via securities, real estate, personal properties, or an estate gift by contacting the church office or Bob Blacklock.

Beginning **January 2016**, you will place the designated amount for "Mission Possible" gifts on the **Capital Campaign** line on your offering envelopes. Donations toward the expenses of our Church Operations (i.e. the General Budget) would go on the **Undesignated** line as always. What was Capital Improvements, funds meant for unexpected major expenses, is now labeled **Building & Grounds Improvements** on the 2016 envelopes.

**If you have any questions, please call the Church Office for clarification.**

**► IMPORTANT ◀**

**Please, look for the MISSION POSSIBLE in red on the outside of any envelopes from St. Paul UMC for timely information regarding our Capital Fund Campaign!**



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# *Mission Possible*

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**FROM THE TRUSTEES TO YOU:**

On **Dec. 2nd** we began arming the alarm system. If you have an entry key and are coming into the church after hours (nobody else around).....you **MUST** enter through the rear door and disarm the alarm using the code you were given when you picked up your new key. When you leave you **MUST** rearm the alarm. Thank you!

The "squirrel" windows have been addressed and therefore, we have completed one more of our tasks from our priority list. Thanks again for all of your patience and assistance throughout the Mission Possible project. Please continue with your patience, support, and prayers as we continue our work toward 100% completion of our projects.

When wanting to borrow anything from the church we ask that you go through Lois in the office so that we know where things are when they are needed. Thank you!

**Best Wishes and God Bless You!**  
**from your Trustees**

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

**Merry Christmas  
Everyone!**

